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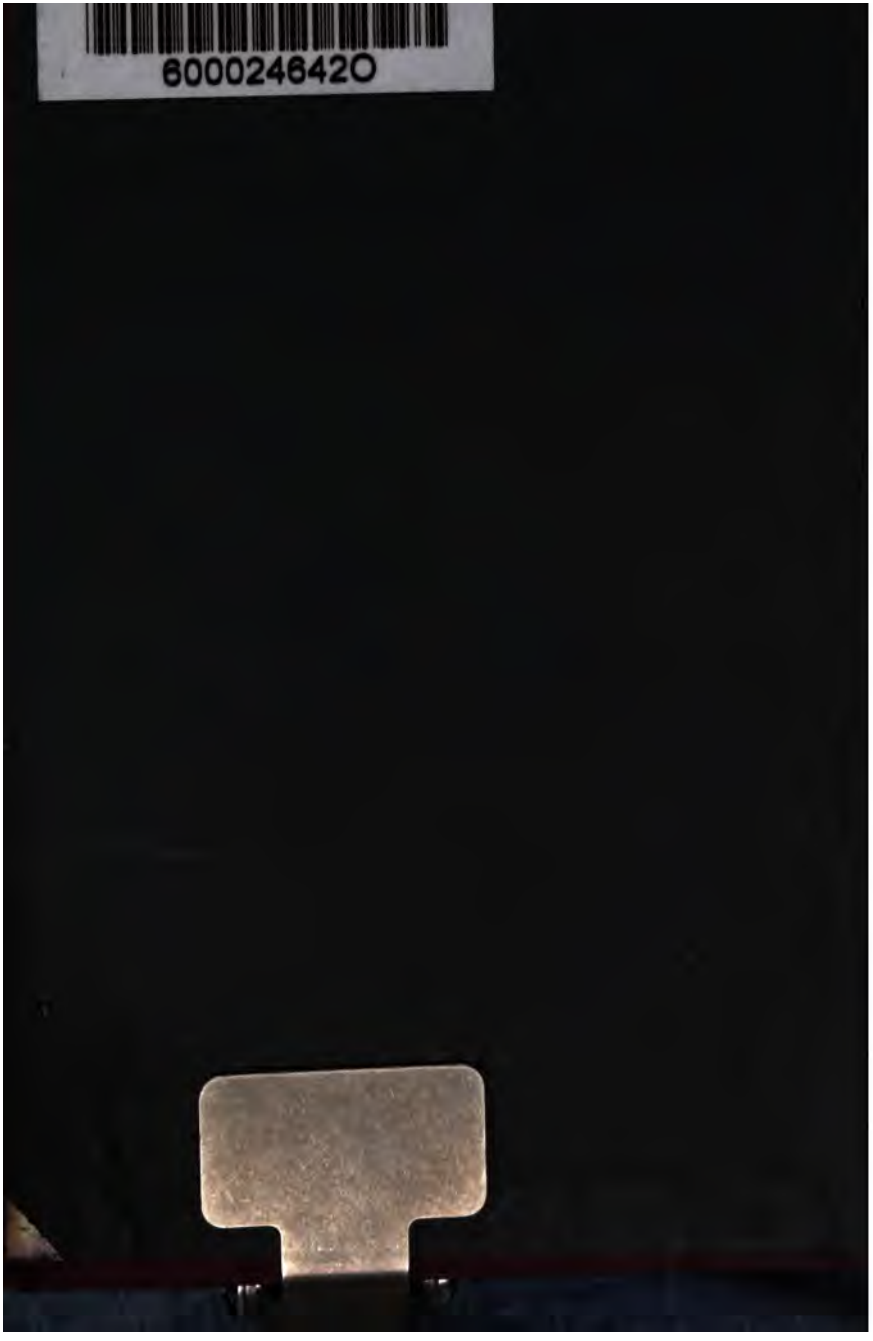
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MUSICAL COMPOSERS AND THEIR WORKS

MUSICAL COMPOSERS

AND THEIR WORKS

For the use of Schools and Students in Music

By SARAH TYTLER
AUTHOR OF "PAPERS FOR THOUGHTFUL GIRLS," ETC.

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PREFACE.

I HAVE only to say, as I said in the prefaces to the companion works—"Old Masters" and "Modern Painters,"—that this book is a simple account of the great men of whom it treats, and of their works. It is designed for the use of young people in the course of their musical education, and for older persons who have neither the time nor the opportunity to refer to original sources of information. I have neither attempted nor desired to make the book exhaustive. I wish to apologize for the disproportionate length to which I have allowed the sketches of Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelssohn, and Moscheles to extend. Fearing that, in the nature of the work, it was apt to lapse into a mere dry catalogue of names and dates, repellant to most readers, young or old, I was fain, when I had ample and very attractive material, to bring out the human element with all the skill in my power. With regard to the three first composers, their

high standing was enough to warrant the prominence granted to them. In the case of Moscheles it seemed to me that it was well to give in detail the account of one great musical composer in the second rank. His intimate connection with the first musical composers throughout his long life rendered him also a link between the past and the present in the annals of music.

February, 1875.

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CHAPTER I.

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I HAVE been induced to bring together the following simple particulars of the lives of the great musical composers and of their works, believing that, though music is speech without words, and explains itself in a great degree to its votaries, some acquaintance with the lives and characters of the maestros and with their meaning in their creations is necessary to the full intelligent comprehension and appreciation of oratorios and operas, nay, of symphonies and sonatas. I have been led to conclude that a book which will present collectively and within easily-attained bounds the biographies of the great composers, and give, as far as possible, an idea of the bent of their genius, may be at once acceptable and useful to the many students of music in this country. Above all, I have planned the book for youthful students who desire to learn something of the men that are the acknowledged masters of one, and that a very delightful, field of art, and to have some account of those productions, whether oratorios or operas—in their entire compass, with regard to which young students are apt to be limited in their knowledge to fragments and

morsels. Of course I leave it to be implied that the individuals who have wider opportunities and command greater leisure are expected to carry their inquiries to the sources of information, and to procure from the separate and complete biographies of the distinguished composers, and from the close personal study of the great musical works, the thorough satisfaction of which this book only professes to give them an instalment, to serve as a preparation.

I need say very little of the rise and progress of music and instruments of music, from the exercise of the human voice to the first simple pipe on to that combination of pipes which forms the organ; or from the earliest attempt at a violin to the finished unsurpassed violins of Stradiuarius, the great Cremona violin-maker of 1720, who employed twenty years' labour in bringing his instruments to exquisite perfection in every detail; or from the earliest harp or lyre on through dulcimer, clavichord, virginal, and spinet to the modern piano; or with a little divergence from the rudest bell that ever laid the foundation of a Great Tom or a Big Ben, on to those musical bells of the different towns of Flanders, and especially to those bells under Matthias Van den Gheyn of Louvain, between 1721 and 1785, which rung carillons and "streamed out in truly wild and magic music over the town," but which, while the carillons still sound over the quaint houses and by the slow rivers, to the wonder and approval of foreigners, have lost the cunning imparted to them by the master hand.* Not only have modern researches into musical instruments, with the collection of specimens in popular museums, made the different stages plain to the

* Haweis, "Music and Morals."

curious investigator, but without such illustrations a considerable knowledge of mechanics would be necessary, both on my part and on that of my readers, for them to follow me with profit through a minute account of the various inventions which have resulted in the present organs and pianofortes, and which, in so far as violins and bells are concerned, appear to have culminated a century and a half ago in those of Stradiuarius and Van den Gheyn.

I shall proceed to say a few words of the early composers, including Palestrina, who may be called the father of cultivated music, and whose works were studied and admired by the great German composers. Before Palestrina's time, no doubt, there were not wanting noble expressions of musical power, solemn, sad, exulting in church music, but these efforts were for the most part single, separate, and isolated, as it were arbitrary and accidental, and with the composers' names lost or blended into one, as in the case of the composers of some of the grandest old hymns of the Church, even as the early monks who spent long, intent, painstaking lives in producing gorgeous effects of missal illumination or of glass-staining have vanished in the obscurity of remote centuries and have left little sign of the individual men. To such sacred songs—bearing the name of the pope, Gregory the Great, who revived, about the end of the sixth century, what remained of the musical work of St. Ambrose, issued an authorized book of ecclesiastical music, and founded musical colleges—belong the famous Gregorian chants.

According to Mr. Hullah, modern music dates no farther back than 1400, while ancient music which preceded it, in its greatest ingenuity, was singularly crude and monotonous. The great change between the two systems, the

last of which came to perfection, as far as men can judge, in the eighteenth century, was effected towards the close of the sixteenth century by the construction of the definitions major and minor, leading to the perfect cadence.*

"The great difference between the music of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and that of our own time, between the music of the old masters and that of our immediate predecessors and contemporaries, results from the former having had views of the nature of a scale or key which were very different from ours."—(*Hullah.*)

John Dunstable, the date of whose birth is uncertain, and who died in 1458, lived before the key had been found to musical science, but was in his day so distinguished a musician that his name was long remembered, and is still cherished by the students of music. Dunstable is believed to have been born at the town in Bedfordshire to which he owed his name. The most that is known of his life seems to be derived from the epitaphs which were written on him, one of which was preserved by Fuller. According to one of his epitaphs, Dunstable was great in mathematics and astronomy, as well as in music. A fragment of his writing is to be seen in the Bodleian Library. The invention of counterpoint in music was once ascribed, as it is now held erroneously, to Dunstable. The only composition of his which survives is a "Veni sancti spiritus." Dunstable, on his death in 1458, was buried in the church of St. Stephen Walbrook.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, sometimes named Prænestinus, was born near Rome, at the little town the name of which he bore, in 1524. He was sent in his youth to study music in Rome, and before he was thirty

* Haweis.

years of age was appointed *magister puerorum*, and later *magister capellæ*, in the Julian Chapel of Julius II., the fiery pope so associated with the art of Michael Angelo. As a further proof of Pope Julius's favour, Palestrina was appointed one of the singers in the pontifical chapel, and resigned his earlier appointment. But a future pope, Paul IV., objected to the fact that Palestrina and other singers in the chapel were married men, and discharged them. Palestrina was reduced, for the support of himself and his family, for whom he had no provision beyond a small pension granted to him on his dismissal by the pope, to taking an inferior situation in the church of S. Giovanni di Laterno, from which he was promoted to a superior situation in the church of Sta. Maria Maggiore. The Council of Trent having called for a reformation in church music, Pope Pius IV., with two of his cardinals and a committee of eight drawn from the college of singers, attempted to put the reformation into practice. To assist the decisions of the Council, Palestrina wrote several masses, one of which was greatly admired, and procured for its author the post of composer to the apostolic chapel. Palestrina included this mass in the first of two volumes of masses, which he dedicated in succession to Philip II. of Spain. In 1571, Palestrina, then forty-seven years of age, was reappointed, on the death of its holder, to the situation of master of the chapel in the Vatican, which he had resigned in order to become one of the pontifical singers. Shortly afterwards, in conjunction with two friends and fellow-composers, he founded a renowned musical school in Rome. Palestrina died in Rome at the age of seventy years, and was buried in the church of the Vatican.

Palestrina's works included many volumes of masses,

offertories, and litanies, &c., &c., with several volumes of madrigals. Amongst his most popular compositions was that called the *Improperia*, performed in the church of Sta. Maria Maggiore on Good Friday, 1560, when Palestrina was thirty-six years of age, and meeting with such high approval, that from that day till now the *Improperia* has been performed every Good Friday in the pontifical chapel. This *Improperia* was published by Dr. Burney in London in 1772.* Acting as the forerunner of those composers whose discoveries and improvements have greatly contributed to make modern music what it is, Palestrina, though he is rather the herald of the great composers than one of the greatest in his own person, has an honoured place in the roll of the maestros. The music performed in the pope's chapel during the Holy Week is the joint work of Palestrina and his pupil and fellow-singer, Allegri, to whom is due the famous *Miserere*.

John Bull was born in 1563, in Somersetshire. According to tradition, he was a scion of the great house of Somerset. He was educated under the organist of the Chapel Royal in the reign of Elizabeth, and took in succession the degree of bachelor of music and doctor of music at Oxford, in his twenty-fourth and twenty-seventh years. He was appointed to the post of organist to the royal chapel when he was twenty-eight years of age; at that time he was, in the words of a contemporary, "a most prodigious hand on the organ." At the express request of the queen, who was herself no mean performer on the virginal, he was appointed the first professor of music in Gresham College.†

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

† "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

Before his fortieth year, Bull went abroad for his health, and no doubt profited by the attainments of his foreign brethren. On his return to England, and under James I., Dr. Bull not only retained his previous offices, but was chosen to be one of the chamber musicians to the king, and to give musical instruction to Henry, Prince of Wales. The old historian, Stow, records the circumstance of Bull's entertaining the king and the prince by playing on the organ at Merchant Taylors' Hall, July 16th, 1607, the election day of the master and wardens. It was for this entertainment that he is said to have composed the national anthem of "God save the King." One is vividly reminded by these details of old royal feasts and progresses in which doctors of music played prominent parts. In Scotland, where music was a strong element in the Reformation, the king was wont to be greeted and to have his royal ears regaled on his entrance into a burgher town, or on his sitting down to a collation prepared in his honour by his burgher lieges, by the precentor of the parish church, not then shorn of his dignity, but well-nigh as mighty a man as the reverend minister.

Apparently Bull's relations with his royal patrons and with the English public were not always harmonious, for we are told that he went abroad for the last time without license, and entered the service of the Archduke of Austria, being in the end appointed organist to the church of Notre Dame, Antwerp. Bull lived fourteen years in the service of the archduke, and died in 1628, in his sixty-sixth year. A portrait of him in his dress as a bachelor of music, painted on board, remains at Oxford.

Dr. Bull, whose fame as a musician in his own day was European, is said to have left behind him a collection of

fugues, canons, variations on the old Gregorian hymns, &c., &c., including several versions of "God save the King," to which his claim of authorship has been disputed. This collection was in existence within the last forty years, and a proposal, which did not meet with sufficient support, was then made to publish it.

Orlando Gibbons was born in 1583, in Cambridgeshire, and when he was but twenty-one years of age was appointed organist of the Chapel Royal. When he was twenty-three years of age, like Bull, who was afterwards his friend, Gibbons became a bachelor of music, but at Cambridge instead of Oxford, though it was from Oxford that he took his degree of doctor of music in 1622, when he was thirty-nine years of age. Three years later, in 1625, when Gibbons was in waiting at the marriage of Charles I. and Henrietta Maria, a ceremony for which he composed the music, he was seized with small-pox, of which he died in his forty-third year. He was buried in Canterbury Cathedral, where his widow caused his monument to be erected. Gibbons was associated with Dr. John Bull and another composer in preparing a music-book for the virginal. Among other music written by him which was not sacred there were many madrigals for voices and viols—melodies and fancies; but his great achievements were accomplished in music more strictly sacred than the airs to which he set George Withers's words—such were church services, including nearly a hundred anthems. The charms of Gibbons's music are said to be those of perfection of harmony, naturalness, and more than a touch of sublimity. Gibbons is universally acknowledged to have been a great musical genius.

Henry Purcell was born in 1658, in London. He came

of a musical family, both his father and uncle having been gentlemen in the Chapel Royal. The elder Purcell died when Henry was a child of six years; but the little boy's musical education went on, with that of the other children of the school, under Cook, at Westminster, and under Humphries. In 1676, when Purcell still wanted two years of being twenty, he was appointed organist of Westminster Abbey, and shortly afterwards he became one of the organists of the Chapel Royal.

A curious little incident, illustrative of the times, turned Purcell's attention to the theatre as a source of musical inspiration. A dancing-master and composer of ballets, who kept a boarding-school for young ladies, at Chelsea, got up a piece, to be performed by his pupils, which had a duly classical basis, and was called "Dido and Æneas," and for which Tate wrote the words and Purcell—a lad of nineteen—the music. This little school operetta may remind my readers of Racine's play of Esther, written for and played by the demoiselles of St. Cyr, before Louis XIV. and Madame Maintenon. But Racine certainly did not play the part of Ahasuerus, while it is thought probable* that Purcell, who was renowned as a singer, sustained the character of Æneas, and with it the weight of the piece. The success to which he was the main contributor tempted Purcell to write for the stage, and to the stage thenceforth he directed his chief energies.

With the civil wars and the Restoration the stage suffered an eclipse and a revival; but the last, alas! was debased and deformed by terrible moral corruption, from which it has only partially recovered. At the same time there was no want of life, talent, and even genius, however

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

abused, in Charles II.'s and the Duke of York's theatres, for which Dryden, Lee, and Durfey supplied and altered original plays. For many of these plays, including the *Tempest** and the *Indian Queen*, Purcell furnished overtures and airs, which, after two hundred years, still charm the musical world. For the play of *Bonduca* he wrote the famous duet and air "To arms," and "Britons, strike home." Purcell's house was in St. Anne's Lane, Westminster; but there was another house still more closely associated with him—the tavern which bore his name as "Purcell's Head," and a half-length portrait of him in a green night-gown and full-bottomed wig for a sign. This and other taverns were wont to resound with his catches and glees. The license and wild dissipation which followed the Restoration and were the reaction from Puritanism, and which proved fatal, morally and physically, to many a gallant and wit, are said to have been indirectly fatal to Purcell. A curious little story is told of his having caught a cold which terminated in consumption, in consequence of having been shut out of his own house on an inclement night by Mrs. Purcell's orders, given to the servants, that he should not be let in after midnight. Surely Mrs. Pepys herself could not have been more precise or authoritative in her directions. Indeed the few accounts of Purcell read like a page from Samuel Pepys's Diary, and form a very different life from that led by many of the early and late absorbed, temperate, unworldly foreign maestros. Henry Purcell died in 1695, in his thirty-eighth year. He was buried under the organ in Westminster Abbey, where a flat stone, with the inscrip-

* For the *Tempest* Purcell wrote the famous settings of "Full fathoms five" and "Come unto these yellow sands."

tion totally effaced by passing feet, marks his grave. In Purcell's lifetime he published twelve sonatas for violins, professedly an imitation of the Italian masters, and for the purpose of bringing grave music into fashion.* Of his numerous songs and duets his widow made a collection, publishing them with a dedication (in which she or some representative lauded highly the deceased composer and husband) and under the name of "Orpheus Britannicus." Purcell's glees and rounds remain well known.

In the criticism of Mr. Haweis, Purcell's music is said to stand "between the past and the future." He entered into the light spirit of his age, and yet at the same time he went beyond it; and this advance he accomplished paradoxically by a retrogression, drawing his inspiration of deeper rhythm and harmony from the older schools of Elizabeth's and Henry VIII.'s reigns. Mr. Haweis accuses Purcell, in company with still more famous composers, of a "passion for expressing words in notes," which caused him, in setting the words "They that go down to the sea in ships" to take the bass down a couple of octaves, and to carry the same bass (in the words) "up to heaven" on a high dotted crotchet, a practice which the critic stigmatizes as "a puerile and mistaken view of the sphere and legitimate functions of music."†

A contemporary of Purcell's, who survived him many years, was John Bishop, the eminent cathedral musician of Cambridge and Winchester. He wrote many services and anthems, and died in 1737.

The two Scarlatti, father and son, from 1650 to 1751,

* "His majesty Charles II. was altogether intolerant of contrapuntal artifice; he liked music to which he could beat time."—HULLAH.

† Haweis, "Music and Morals."

did much for Italian music. Alessandro Scarlatti, the father, a Sicilian by birth, travelled through Italy and visited Vienna in the acquirement of his art. Settling at Naples, he regenerated the Neapolitan school of music, and was the composer of many grand and striking pieces, both in sacred and secular art. He was a man in advance of his age.* His son Domenico was in Rome when Handel was there. Domenico Scarlatti went to Portugal, and finally to Spain, where he composed his harpsichord sonatas, dedicated to his old pupil the Queen of Spain. —(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*)

Alessandro Stradella, a famous violinist and composer, was born in Naples, about 1650. While residing in Venice, he eloped with a pupil, who was loved by a Venetian nobleman. This man pursued Stradella and the young Roman girl with relentless vengeance. The couple fled to Rome, to which their foe tracked them; but where his messengers, according to a musical tradition, were turned from their deadly purpose by hearing Stradella sing the canticle to the Virgin from his own oratorio of *St. John*. From Rome the pair repaired to Turin, where the Duchess of Savoy took them under her protection. In spite of this shield, Stradella was stabbed by hired assassins, while walking on the ramparts of the

* "He discharged for many years the function of royal chapel-master at Naples; but his chief claim to the esteem and affections of the Neapolitans consisted in his gratuitous and indefatigable labours as music-master in a large charity-school, known under the name of 'Jesus Christ's Poor of Loretto.'"—HAWEIS. "He was the composer of certainly one hundred and twelve operas, two hundred masses, eight or ten oratorios, &c., &c. One of his madrigals, 'Car Mio,' is unquestionably one of the most learned pieces of music in existence." —HULLAH.

town. His injuries did not prove fatal, and, after his recovery, he went with his wife to Genoa, where, still dogged by their enemy, their apartment was entered during the night, and both husband and wife foully murdered, the perpetrators of the crime escaping in the galley kept in the port for their retreat. Stradella's death occurred in 1679, before he was thirty years of age. His works include an oratorio on *St. John the Baptist*, and an opera called *La Forza dell' Amor Paterna.*—(*Biographical Dictionary of Musicians.*)

CHAPTER II.

Bach, 1685—1750; Handel, 1685—1759; Gluck, 1714—1787; Haydn, 1732—1809.

WITH Sebastian Bach we have the beginning of the great cycle of musical composers in whom, according to some authorities, art vindicated her immortality by replacing the great painters, just as the painters succeeded the great architects of the Middle Ages. Sebastian Bach came of not merely a family, but of a race of musicians—a race, too, that more than any other race demonstrates the degree to which music is hereditary in Germany. The Bachs, in Sebastian's day, dated their origin and musical proclivities fully a century and a half back to a Hungarian Bach, who was at once musical and polemical, and who in his quiet calling of a miller and baker was so affected by the religious discords of the time, that he quitted Presburg, and repaired to a village of Saxe-Gotha, where he ground wheat and compounded loaves for his livelihood, and sang to the guitar for his delectation. His sons had musical talents, and his grandsons became musicians *in toto*; from these sons, living about 1625, down to the grandsons of Sebastian Bach, living in 1760, not a single Bach of the race followed any calling save that of music, and the race was so numerous that there was hardly a town in

"Thuringia, Saxony, or Franconia"* which had not a Bach for an organist or music teacher. These Bachs had an annual gathering at Eisenach, Erfurt, or Anstadt, where a hundred and fifty kinsmen would meet, and compare notes on the musicians' progress. They preserved their compositions in a collection named solemnly, "The Archives of the Bachs," which passed into the hands of Sebastian's second son, Emmanuel, and which is yet preserved in Berlin. The Bachs, still true to the spirit of their common ancestor, were as zealous Lutherans as they were enthusiastic musicians; and Sebastian Bach, while he was in all other respects a good Protestant, was the first member of his family who departed so far from its standard as to lend his genius to the composition of services and masses for the use of the Roman Catholic Church. Another peculiarity which seemed to distinguish the Bachs, besides those of their unfailing musical talent, and of their fidelity to the Reformed Church, was their use of the Christian name Johann with another Christian name tacked to it; thus we have Johann Christoph, Johann Ernest, Johann Michael (the greatest Bach was Johann Sebastian). And still further to distinguish the men, we have them indicated as "Bach of Gehren," "Bach of Eisenach," &c., &c.

The Bach genius for music reached its height in Johann Sebastian, and if Mr. Carlyle be right in his assertion, "that genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains," no man who ever lived is better entitled to claim genius than the great organ and clavichord player, composer, and teacher of Leipsic. Johann Sebastian Bach was born at Eisenach in 1685, a year which saw also the

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

birth of Handel. His father was one of twin brothers, with regard to whom the old tradition in reference to twins, which has founded so many comedies of errors, was in full force. They grew up so much alike that they could not be known apart even by intimate acquaintances, and their own wives could hardly recognise the one from the other; they had the most perfect sympathy in body and mind, in this case including music; they were well and ill at the same time, and their deaths followed closely on each other. What is more to the purpose perhaps, that of Johann Ambrosius left Sebastian Bach fatherless at ten years of age. He was cared for and instructed in music by an elder brother, who did not, however, approve of Sebastian's excessive application to, and precocity in his art. The big brother Johann Christoph forbade the little lad Johann Sebastian—no doubt, with reason—the use of a volume which contained the productions of the most learned writers of music belonging to the time. But Sebastian was more determined than obedient, and obtaining possession of the book by stealth, set himself to copy at night and by moonlight—the only light which would enable him to escape detection—the pieces in the music-book. He took six months to the task—for which double retribution befell him. In the first instance, his brother, detecting the evasion of his injunction, confiscated the precious copy which cost Sebastian dear.

Soon death deprived Sebastian of this rigidly conscientious guardian, and forced the little boy to take refuge in a choir at Luneberg, where his ardour caused him to undertake the first of the long walks and fatiguing excursions, with the pursuit and enjoyment of his beloved art as the end in view—which were to continue the great

recreations of his laborious life, whether they were to hear the famous organist Reinken at Hamburg, or the Prince's band at Zell. At the age of eighteen years Sebastian Bach was engaged to play the violin in the band of the Duke of Weimar; but as the organ and not the violin was the instrument to which Bach was devoted, he willingly quitted the duke's service within a year to become organist at Arnstadt. In 1707, when Bach was twenty-two years of age, he was promoted to be organist in the church of St. Blasius at Mühlhausen. Shortly afterwards he took to himself the cares of the head of a family by marrying a kinswoman, one of the many musical Bachs, being a daughter of Bach of Gehren. In another year he returned to Weimar in the honourable capacity of organist. We are told now of his reputation "as an executant, as a composer, and as an extemporist," growing simultaneously with his unwearied studies, and spreading all over Germany; so that he was invited to Dresden to contest with a French musician named Marchand, whether Germany or France should be declared to have the superiority in music. But Marchand did not abide the trial, quitting the city secretly, and leaving the field free to his antagonist. At Köthen, to which Bach had been appointed organist, he lost by death his wife and one of his sons. Not long afterwards he married again. In 1723, when he was thirty-eight years of age, Bach was asked to become organist and cantor to St. Thomas's school, Leipzig; an office which was congenial and advantageous to him, and which he filled contentedly, aspiring to no higher or more public position. The year before he had brought out his first published work, "The Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues."

He had many pupils, amongst them, those of his eleven sons who reached manhood; for his family by his two wives had attained the patriarchal number of twenty children. These twenty children, with their surviving mother, his numerous relations, and the old and intimate friends of the family, formed a kind, homely, social circle, beyond which Bach did not care to move. His engagements of "composing, playing and teaching," in which his heart was centred, together with such appointments as composer to this and that little German sovereign, and Kapell-Meister to the King of Poland, brought him sufficient emoluments to enable him, with the simple frugal habits of the day, to maintain his large family and dispense hospitality to artists like himself, who came from foreign countries to pay him homage and to hear him play. Such pilgrimages met with much sympathy from Bach, as they were the only excursions which he himself undertook. When neither love of fame nor love of money could withdraw him from his absorbing studies and his peaceful home, once and again from youth to age the hope of hearing a great musical performance, of renewing an old or forming a new acquaintance with one of the composers of the day, worthy to be ranked with himself, even the opportunity of judging of a popular opera, enticed Bach abroad. Thus before going to Leipzig he repaired anew to Hamburg to hear for the last time the object of his youthful veneration, the veteran organist Reinken, who had attained an extreme old age, and to play and extemporise in his turn before the old man, who cried with noble exultation, "I thought this art would die with me; but here I find it has a more able representative." And thus Bach took another journey, and sent an urgent

invitation in the vain hope of encountering and entering into a personal friendship with Handel. One of the liveliest episodes in Bach's life is the manner in which, having been persuaded to relax his rules, travel to Potsdam, and visit the son, who was in the service of Frederic the Great, and whose chief duty consisted in playing a pianoforte accompaniment to the king's performance on the flute, the father's musical reputation rendered him the victim to the despotism of the most eccentric and musical of military monarchs. The royal concert was at its height, the king had taken up his flute to play the solo, which was to be listened to with so much admiration and deference, when, according to custom, a list of the strangers arriving that day in the town was handed to Frederic. In the ease of his prerogative, his majesty arrested the concert that he might glance over the list, when he suddenly startled the whole room by the excited exclamation, "Gentlemen, old Bach is come." No time was to be lost in laying hold of a man who had already resisted court invitations and was impervious alike to court smiles and frowns. Sebastian was barely permitted to alight from his long, fatiguing journey at his son's house, ere he was put into a carriage and driven to the palace. There "old Bach," with the dust of the road still upon him, "his eyes somewhat dazzled with the sudden glare of light, steps into the midst of this lordly company of powdered wigs and doublets, and diamond tiaras and sword-hilts. His majesty, after a warm and unceremonious greeting, besought the great contrapuntist to improvise to the company; and Bach passed the remainder of the evening going from room to room followed

by troops of admiring court ladies and musicians, and trying 'forte pianos, made by Silberman.'"*

Towards the close of Bach's life, the misfortune of great loss of sight fell upon him, it has been supposed in remote retribution for that early six months' practice of copying music by moonlight. Operations on the eyes were attempted so unsuccessfully as not only to subject the patient to severe and protracted illness, but to reduce him to a condition of total blindness, from which, however, he was restored ten days before his death; but the restoration was attended with delirium and followed by an apoplectic fit, which was the immediate cause of Bach's death, in 1750, in the sixty-sixth year of his age.

Bach's last composition was the dictation of the chorale, "Wenn wir in höchsten Nöthen sein," in a presentiment that his last hour was near (*Athenæum*). A monument to Bach was erected on the suggestion of Mendelssohn in 1841 at Leipzig. However, the exact spot where the great musician lies buried in the churchyard of St. John's, is unknown. A life of Bach has been recently translated into English.

Three of Bach's sons lived to be more or less distinguished musicians; but though Germans say that only one of Bach's twenty children, and he the ablest of the three sons just mentioned, turned out badly, of none of the three, neither of the courtly and amiable Carl Philip Emmanuel, far less of the notorious lover of pleasure, Johann Christian, could it be said that he came at all near to his great father, either as a man or a meister. The last of the two brothers, who had been only fifteen years of age when his father died, came to London in 1762, and from his long

* Haweis.

residence there until his death in 1782 is known as "Bach of London." In his first opera performed in England, the clarionet was for the first time heard in this country. Bach found favour with his countrywoman, Queen Charlotte, and was appointed her chamber musician, organist, and composer. He wrote largely for the opera, and the concerts of his day, and his music was remarkable for the cunning with which it avoided difficulties, and could be played with the utmost facility. His brother is said to have reproached Johann Christian Bach with his great falling off from the principles and practice of his father, and even from his brother's example, when the culprit made the characteristic defence, "Emmanuel lives to compose, but I compose to live." He became the husband of a long-forgotten prima donna, gave way more and more to dissipation, and died prematurely, overwhelmed with debt, his widow receiving a gratuity from the queen to carry her back to her native country, and a small pension to support her there. It would only be a tyro in music who could confound the works of the younger Bachs with those of their father—the great Sebastian Bach; still it is well to indicate the different individualities, and to call attention to the fact that the "London Bach" of the early part of George III.'s reign, was only a degenerate son of Sebastian Bach's.

Germans love to say of the great Bach that "his character had not a spot, his life was perfect;" and it is true that few more God-fearing, single-minded, earnest, modest, and manly men ever lived. While some of his fellow Lutherans might take exception to the concession which Bach made in writing music in his office of Kapell-Meister to the King of Poland for the Roman Catholic

Church, none questioned Bach's firm adherence in his own person to the Reformed Church of his fathers, any more than his sincere and practical piety. Indeed, a countryman of Bach's says of his works that they are the glorification of Protestantism.

His portrait represents him with a large, heavy, but sagacious face, having an ample forehead, eyes showing already the contraction of failing sight, a ponderous nose, a good firm mouth, and a capacious double chin.

As a composer, Bach is said to have been "the most severely conscientious artist that ever devoted himself to music." Neither ambitious nor covetous, in a worldly sense, and very indifferent to general popularity, he was never led to sacrifice his principles and his true tastes to a widespread, but shallow, and often vicious applause. He conducted the very publication of his works with the greatest deliberation, showing himself reluctant to commit to the press music which he was never wearied of revising and correcting. His attainments were the result of very deep and wide study, extending beyond German to French music. We have it on record from various sources that while the civil wars in England served as a check to English music, the Thirty Years' War in Germany acted as a stimulant on German music, perhaps because the musical faculty is a more integral part and natural expression of German character. Bach substituted for the somewhat narrow, formal, religious music of Germany, the music in which foreign air and sunshine, together with warlike struggles and bloody campaigns, had played their part. The perfection of his music seems to consist in the completeness of every part, its thorough masterly range, and the power with which it is sustained without ever letting

fall or even losing sight of, a single subordinate part; nay, it is said, so harmoniously are the parts balanced and arranged in sequence that the omission of a single part would injure the whole composition in the harmony. But its very wide range, above all its thoroughness in the working out of every detail, is said to operate against the effect of the whole. Bach's music is not only classic, but learnedly classic, and therefore demands learning in the listener to appreciate it. It is true, that in spite of his unrivalled excellence as an executant or player, in which he had as it were two domains, the first to be found in the grandeur of the organ, and the second in the delicacy and expressiveness of the clavichord (a portable instrument preceding the piano), Bach's compositions were not largely known, save by the best professional musicians, in his own day, and, for several generations, not even in his own Germany, the very home of music. Just as some painters and authors have only become understood by the world through the enthusiastic comments of their fellows in art and literature, so Bach needed exponents to his own countrymen, and it was chiefly by the instrumentality of Mendelssohn that Bach's true place was granted among the great composers of the Fatherland, so that now not only is his Matthæus *Passion* as popular in Germany as Handel's *Messiah* is in England (PAUER), but the desire for the magnificent Passion music has spread to England, and to other countries in Europe. Germans record that the merits of Bach's music lie in its "simplicity, precision, and flow;" but the first word must be taken with great reservation as referring solely to singleness and steadfastness of purpose. In the words of an English critic, "In any other sense, his music is beyond

that of any other composer difficult of comprehension, but its measureless beauties will ever repay the pains of the student who unravels them."*

In a lecture, Herr Pauer stated that great enjoyment might be found in playing Bach's music as piano-forte duets. Bach was the first who used the thumb and the fourth finger in fingering on the piano-forte key-board. He was by no means partial to the piano on its first introduction, giving a decided preference to the clavichord, and saying of the piano that it could only be played by the devil or its maker.

A complete edition of Bach's instrumental music in

* John Sebastian Bach, "whose reputation among the learned in music and the unlearned is so widely discrepant, that while by many among the former he is regarded as the most original, the most inventive, the most suggestive, and therefore the most interesting of composers, on the majority of the latter he has never directly exercised any but the feeblest influence, if even that."—HULLAH. Recently, however, Bach's Christmas oratorio has been given four times in England, including its performance twice (1873) in the Royal Albert Hall, Kensington, and at Oxford.

"In one sense, he invented no new style, for he adopted the style of the day, not rebelling against it, enlarging its unity, fellowship, and order, and demonstrating his originality by great dignity of form and magnificent science of structure, united to a marvellous tenderness and joyfulness of expression. . . . . He invented a Bach joyfulness, a Bach sorrow, a personal tenderness, and sanctity and creed, and he concealed and smothered his art by the intensity of the emotional expression. Hence his solemnity, splendour, continued power, richness, breadth, complexity, pathos, joyousness, and brilliancy. . . . He was always a great musician, and something more—an earnest man, and mighty in the outpouring of high thought and assured belief. He had the 'clean hand' and the 'pure heart,' and everything was gathered and governed to the loving elevation of his subject. There is no joy in counterpoint like that of Sebastian Bach; the *Christus* oratorio shows that. There is no sorrow in counterpoint like his: the *Passiones* have proved this."—*Athenæum.*

numerous volumes for the organ and piano has appeared at Leipsic; the Bach Gesellschaft instituted at the centenary of his death engaged to produce his vocal works; and the Bach Society in London was founded in 1849 by Sir W. Sterndale Bennett, for the study of the master.

George Frederick Handel, who was destined to do for vocal music what Beethoven did for instrumental music, was born at Halle in 1685—the date of his birth given on his monument in Westminster Abbey having been proved wrong by a year. Handel was the son of a barber who raised himself from shaving citizens to being court surgeon. Unlike Bach, Handel did not come of a musical family, and his father had a thorough contempt for the social position of the performers of the French and Italian music then prevalent in Germany. Dr. Handel was, in addition, an old man of sixty-three years of age, whose prejudices were not likely to be easily overthrown, when his youngest son, George Frederick, was born; and when the boy showed a passion for music, the father opposed it as passionately, determined that the child of his old age should be trained for a doctor of law or medicine, but never for a miserable musician. From his mother, however,—who had been the daughter of a pastor, was Dr. Handel's second wife, and was not far past the prime of life, the boy had probably some support in his inclinations; and it might have been by her instrumentality that, when he was forbidden any formal instruction in music, he had, according to one account, a spinet, according to another, a clavichord, hidden in a garret, to which the little boy resorted for the indulgence of his strong inclination to music, and on which he taught himself unaided to play. When Handel was seven years of age, his father was per-

suaded to take him on a visit to a half-brother who was in the service of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels. Hearing the duke's great organ at the chapel service so entranced the child, that he escaped from custody, and was found, to his father's horror, awaking the silent echoes of so triply fenced a place as a duke's private chapel, by making music with his childish fingers on the grand organ. But the indulgent duke forbade the child's punishment, and asked instead that little Handel should play to him, praising the juvenile performance, telling the father that the son was a genius, and ought to be reared to be a great musician. The duke's friendly interference—of which Handel to the end of his life cherished an affectionate remembrance—changed, humanly speaking, the whole course of the lad's destiny. His softened and gratified father carried Handel back to Halle and placed him under Zackau, the cathedral organist, whose favourite pupil the boy became. When he was still but eleven years of age, Zackau declared that he could teach the boy Handel no more than he already knew with regard to the organ, harpsichord, and violin, and with regard to composition, and he advised that he should be sent for farther instruction to Berlin.

In the capital, Handel's talents were freely acknowledged, even although they brought him into comparison with two famous Italians of his day, who were long years afterwards to be his rivals in London. The great Elector distinguished Handel by his notice, and proposed to attach him to his court, and to send him to Italy to complete his education; but the lad, or his father for him, showing betimes the independent, resolute spirit of the man, declined the tempting offer, and waited till he could go

to Italy on his own responsibility, paying his own expenses.

In the meantime he was summoned back to Halle, where his father soon afterwards died, and Handel had to aid in the support of his widowed mother and family by becoming a violinist at the Hamburg Opera House. It is said that he played the violin very indifferently, and was sneered at by his fellow-musicians, till one day "the harpsichordist" (the principal person in the orchestra) "being absent, Handel, then about nineteen, sat down in the maestro's place, and finished by conducting the rehearsal with such ability that the whole orchestra broke into loud applause."—(*Haweis.*)

Handel succeeded to the post of harpsichordist. About this time he formed a friendship with a Halle student named Schmidt, which, after being intermitted and resumed a little later, formed a marked element in Handel's long bachelor life spent in a foreign country. Another friendship of this period had tragi-comic results, and was threatened with speedy rupture. Handel and a young man named Matthewson, another musician, went in turn to Lübeck with the option of either of the friends becoming organist there, provided that, according to a curious stipulation, he married the daughter of the retiring organist. Both young men journeyed to Lübeck, for the purpose of inspecting the organ and the maiden; but, alas! for the combined charms of organ and maiden, both young men withdrew from the competition, and decided to remain minus an organ and minus a wife. Before Handel and Matthewson drifted asunder in the world, they fought a duel—German student like—about one of their rival operas, with drawn swords, in front of

the theatre at Hamburg; and were only separated, after Matthewson's sword had shivered on one of Handel's brass buttons, by an illustrious councillor stepping between the combatants and declaring that the claims of honour were satisfied. So fully was the councillor's assertion confirmed by the hot-headed young men, that they dined together, and swore faster friendship than ever, within a few weeks.

At Hamburg, in 1704, when Handel was yet in his twentieth year, he composed his first work of any note—his "Passion," a cantata for Good Friday; and in the following year he wrote his first dramatic work, the opera of *Almeira*, which was represented with encouraging success. Handel then refused, for a second time, to be franked to Italy—this time by a prince of the Medici house—but, having saved a sufficient sum from his earnings for expenses, responded so far to the prince's invitation, that he set out on his own account, and by the help of his slender purse, for Florence. Mr. Haweis speculates on the impression which must have been made on the sensitive and artistic German by his visits, in succession, to the Florence and Venice of the old republics and the old painters, and to the Rome which had been alike mistress of the pagan and of the Christian world, and of the charmed realm of art. We are not left ignorant of the effect which Handel produced upon the Venetians, who called him "the dear Saxon," and pitted him against the great Italian harpsichord player, Scarlatti. Of the competition between the two, Mr. Haweis quotes a picturesque anecdote. It was the season of the carnival in Venice; and Handel, in a masque, had joined one of the aristocratic gatherings, and sat down at a harpsichord, where

his playing attracted little attention in the midst of the noisy revelry, till Scarlatti came into the room, and walking straight to the instrument, called out, "It is either the devil or the Saxon." Mr. Haweis records that Handel and Scarlatti were, to their mutual credit, fair and friendly rivals—that they always spoke of each other with respect and admiration, to which Scarlatti added the whimsical testimony, that when any one complimented him on his playing, he would "pronounce Handel's name and cross himself." Scarlatti had the palm awarded to him at the harpsichord; but Handel excelled at the organ.

At Florence and Venice Handel composed respectively the operas *Rodrigo* and *Agripina*, the last of his numerous secondary operas which my limited space will allow me to mention. I shall, in preference, call my readers' attention to Handel's greatest works, in succession.

In Rome Handel received marked attention. From Rome he proceeded to Naples, where he wrote an Italian version of his much more famous English cantata of "Acis and Galatea," and a number of songs, which became popular throughout Europe; and there he made his single approach to writing music for the mass.

From Italy Handel was summoned home by the death of a sister; and, in 1709, when he was twenty-four years of age, he was appointed Kapell-Meister to the Elector of Brunswick, with a salary of fifteen hundred crowns. In the following year, after going to Halle to see his mother, who had become blind, Handel visited England. He was immediately employed to compose an opera, for which Aaron Hill, the dramatic author, wrote the libretto in

English. This was the opera of *Rinaldo*, which was produced on a day that, from first to last, was very notable in Handel's life—the day of his baptism—the 24th of February, at the King's Theatre, in the Haymarket. The opera inaugurated Handel's work in England with a delusive burst of success, and the music of it, set to the harpsichord, was at once played all over the country. Two of the airs from this opera are still well known—that of "Lascia ch'io," &c. &c., and what was known to military bands for half a century as "The Royal Guards March." All authorities agree on the great profits, amounting to one thousand five hundred pounds, made on the sale of this opera; and, on their falling to the publisher, who, on a chance encounter with the composer, was thus significantly addressed, "My friend, next time you shall compose the opera, and I will sell it."

Recalled to Hanover by his duties there, the attraction to London proved too strong for Handel; he again sought leave of absence, and was back in England so soon as 1712, in time to compose an ode for Queen Anne's birthday. This year, when Handel was twenty-seven years of age, saw him fairly launched on his musical career in England; for, in spite of his engagement to the Elector, he outstayed his leave, and never returned, in his official capacity, to Hanover. Handel had just done his part to the celebration of the peace of Utrecht, in the public thanksgiving in St. Paul's, by a famous *Te Deum* and Jubilate, which had procured for him, from the queen, a pension of two hundred pounds a year, and rendered him so far independent of the Elector's salary.

The composer was placed in awkward and difficult circumstances by the death of Queen Anne, in 1714, and by

the accession to the English throne of Handel's former and justly offended master, the Elector of Hanover, who, as George I., refused, for a time, to have anything to say to his truant Kapell-Meister. But, in the narrative of Mr. Haweis, the atmosphere of London was so "charged with Handel," when people sang him in the streets—the band played him in Palace Yard—his name filled the opera, and was inscribed on every piece of music; the very violinist commissioned to play in the king's ante-chamber brought the offender there to accompany him in a sonata; that it was impossible for George, one of the good sides of whose German phlegm was that it was not vindictive, to continue obdurate. The occasion of the reconciliation was at a water party on the Thames, when a boat came after the royal barge playing the pieces which were afterwards called "the water music." The king knew that but one man in the kingdom could have written such music, and summoned Handel, granting him the royal pardon and a new pension of two hundred a year. From the composition and representation of the opera which succeeded this reinstalment in favour, is dated the beginning of Handel's decline in the capricious graces of the world of quality and fashion. Still Handel had powerful and influential patrons, not only in the king, who continued more faithful to his countryman than the musician had been to his sovereign; but in the music-loving Earl of Burlington, whose house was then "in the fields," and in the great Duke of Chandos, who appointed Handel organist to his private chapel at Cannons, at the end of "the pleasant country drive of the Edgeware Road," which was frequented on Sundays by fashionable company desiring to attend the duke's chapel, and to hear

Handel play. There Handel composed his Chandos anthems, his first oratorio, *Esther*, which was to be long laid aside, and his English version of *Acis and Galatea*. Mr. Haweis takes pains to bring before us the lions of the noble and brilliant society which Handel then frequented. Among these lions were Pope, Addison, Gay, Arbuthnot; and as lions also, still in their obscure cubbishness, were young Samuel Johnson and Richard Savage, while Swift was already a dean in a shovel-hat, and is represented as quoting his famous epigram—

> "Some say that Signor Bononcini,
> Compared to Handel, is a ninny;
> While others vow that to him Handel
> Is hardly fit to hold a candle.
> Strange that such difference should be
> 'Twixt tweedle dum and tweedle dee."

But none of the figures which Mr. Haweis conjures up is so original and characteristic in its place as that of Thomas Britton, the coal heaver of Clerkenwell Green, who is a renowned player on the viol de gamba, and gives concerts in his long low room, built over the stable, "and where he is assisted by all the musical geniuses in England, including Banister at the violin and Handel at the organ. These concerts, in the racy picturesque breadth of association of the day, are eagerly attended by the music-loving members of the quality," among them "charming" Kitty Hyde, Duchess of Queensberry, who is represented as received and shown up the narrow staircase by Britton, in the unaffected native guise of dustman's hat and coarse blouse. And Britton himself is not more independent and abrupt in his way than the stout, just, and generous, but very irascible court composer.

On a visit to Germany which Handel made about this time, either in the suite of George I. or by himself, he found and brought to England with him his old student friend Schmidt, who, under the English name of Smith, henceforth acted as Handel's treasurer. Handel gave musical instruction to the children of the Prince of Wales; for Princess Anne, the composer wrote his first collection of "Suites de Pièces," of which Mr. Haweis says one choice specimen was soon reprinted in France, Switzerland, Holland and Germany. That specimen was "The Harmonious Blacksmith." I am sorry to be obliged to demolish, with regard to it, all the pretty stories which have been told regarding its origin and name, such as that of Handel having been in the country and overtaken by a shower, near a rustic little church, with an old organ, and having a blacksmith's forge in the neighbourhood, and of the composer, after listening for a time to the blows of the unconscious performer on the anvil, and the pattering of the rain, entering the church, sitting down at the organ, and reproducing the prevailing sounds in a wonderful melody. The real and more prosaic, if still fantastic reason, of the name, is said to be that a music-seller of Bath, who made his first experiment in trade with this air, and who had been in early life a blacksmith, desired to signalise the circumstance, of which he was proud rather than ashamed, by associating Handel's production with the music-seller's history, and with his musical proclivities, in the title of "The Harmonious Blacksmith."*

With regard to the proficiency in music of the Prince of Wales, whom Handel had also taught, even the honest blunt

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

musician is said to have practised adroitness in his reply to the trying request from the pupil for the master's opinion on his progress. "Vy," answered Handel, in his English, which was always broken, "your royal highness plays like a prince."

In the operas *Floridante* and *Otto*, composed in 1721 and 1723, Handel was considered to have specially distinguished himself. *Otto* was, we are told, generally regarded as "the flower" of his operas, and was "one long string of gems," "each air" of which "became in its turn a favourite throughout the land." *Flavio*, and *Giulio Cesare*, and *Scipione*, all favourites with the people, also followed closely. In 1725 Handel took the house in Brook Street, which he occupied while in London to the close of his life. In the opera of *Muzio Scevola*, published before the operas last mentioned, Handel made one composer of three who wrote the music conjointly; the other composers, who had been competitors with Handel when he was a lad in Berlin, were Ariosti and Bononcini. Those Italians were to become powerful opponents to Handel—not so much because of their own merits, or even because of the defective musical taste of the day, but because of the strong faction of the aristocracy, and with them large portions of the press, who ranged themselves against Handel, and made the question whether he or the Italian masters were the superior party a question of the day. The parties headed on the one side by George I. and George II., the latter of whom had all his father's partiality for Handel; and on the other, by those who regarded the German's promotion as due to the offensive German tone of the court, chief among them the great Duke of Marlborough, who, with his amazon duchess, spent twelve thou-

sand pounds in the effort, which prospered only too well, of supporting an opposition opera-house and ruining Handel. In pursuance of this scheme *The Beggars' Opera*, which was planned with the intention of giving a ludicrous travesty of the heroics of the Italian opera, and turning the whole into derision, came out at the rival house. Addressing itself as it did to English prejudices, and supported as it was by the amount of audacious cleverness which went to its production, and by the airs and graces of the new actress Lavinia Fenton, who, as Polly Peachum, sang herself into the coronet of the Duchess of Bolton, nothing more was wanting than what might be confidently counted on in the fickleness of public taste, to render the opera what it was—the rage of the hour, and the most triumphant of burlesques. Mr. Haweis quotes various lively anecdotes of the vehemence as well as energy with which Handel fought his battle against the rival opera-house, of his furious contests with tenors and *prime donne*, of the wrath which he did not hesitate to direct against the whole house; how, when a singer declined to sing a particular air, Handel rushed "into the trembling Italian's house, shook the music in his face," and shouted, "You tog! don't I know better as yourself vat you shall sing? If you vill not sing all de song vat I give you, I vill not pay you ein stiver!" and how Handel seized a rebellious prima donna by the arm, "shook her like a rat," and threatened to pitch her out of an open window. As a pendant to these stories, are the well-authenticated records of Handel's munificence from first to last; to musicians especially, to poor musicians, for whose benefit he was constantly ready to perform. But perhaps the most amusing tale in the budget, is that of a mischievous

practical joker having taken advantage of Handel's notorious dislike to the tuning of instruments in full orchestra—so that the tuning had to be done beforehand —to put every instrument out of tune. The consequence was, that the first start was a universal bray and crash of discord, which had the effect of driving the master into sudden frenzy. He darted from his place, kicked to pieces a double bass, flung a kettledrum at the head of the leader of the band, and having lost his wig in his exertions, stood in his denuded condition before the foot-lights "snorting with rage and choked with passion," until the Prince of Wales, who was in the house, went down to him, and "with much difficulty prevailed on him to resume his wig and his opera." It is said that Handel's wig served as an index of his excitable temper; when he was pleased every curl would nod and vibrate, while the absolute stillness of the wig was a bad sign of the mental thermometer of its wearer. Before such an indication the Princess of Wales would whisper to her ladies-in-waiting, who committed the enormity of talking at the Prince's concerts, "Hush! hush! don't you see Handel is in a passion?" *

I have read a story of Handel which may be as apocryphal as that of the origin of the "Harmonious Blacksmith," but which is at least very characteristic of the man. It is said that a naval officer of musical tastes and of a temper as irate as Handel's, had engaged the composer to write an air for him at a certain price. On the officer calling to carry away his air, on the eve of the sailing of his ship, he found that the air had not been written. The disappointed man stormed and threatened

* Haweis.

to break the bargain. Handel stormed back again and broke the bargain, declining to write a note of the air within any length of time. The amateur was brought to his senses, and tried to pacify and bribe the composer by offering a higher price for his work. In vain; the more he raised the sum the more malicious a pleasure Handel seemed to feel in baulking the intended buyer. At last, in his despair, the officer let fall some words of bitter regret which appeared to touch the hitherto inexorable composer. He suddenly and shortly took back his word, and engaged to send the air at the price originally agreed upon, which was paid on the spot, in order to seal the compact. This time he was faithful to his engagement, and when the officer unrolled the sheet of music, he found to his intense gratification and gratitude that Handel had sent him two airs instead of one.

Dubourg, a well-known violinist, led the violins for Handel when he was in Dublin. One night Dubourg, having a solo part in a song, and a close to make *ad libitum*, wandered about a great while and seemed a little bewildered and uncertain of his *original* key; but at length, coming to a shake, which was to terminate this long close, Handel, to the great delight of the audience and the augmentation of the applause, cried out loud enough to be heard in the most remote parts of the theatre, "You are welcome home, M. Dubourg."

The good which flowed from Handel's misfortunes came only after a struggle of twenty disastrous years, during which he brought artiste after artiste from Italy, and conformed sedulously to the whims and fancies of the public, in order to turn the tide of his wavering fortunes. It was not until Handel had lost ten thousand pounds of

his savings and been compelled to become bankrupt, after he was beggared in purse, and, as it seemed, in reputation, and with his hot, brave heart half broken, that he was induced to turn his full attention to the field—that of sacred music and oratorios—in which he was to win his glorious, unfading laurels. In the meantime Handel had made a diversion in the calamitous course of his operas, by the composition of four grand anthems which celebrated the coronation of George II. and his Queen Caroline in 1732. When Handel was forty-seven years of age, the half-forgotten oratorio of *Esther*, composed at Cannons twelve years before, was revived and represented by him a year after it had been got up twice, first privately and then more publicly by the Royal Chapel-Master of St. James's. But the belief that oratorios on biblical subjects were profane, was then part of the creed which was painfully illustrated by the low moral standard of the English public of the day; and so far from *Esther*, or as it was then named "Hester," (though it was received with considerable approbation), being able to turn at once the tide of Handel's fortunes, it was not till he was rendered still more desperate of operatic success in England, that he could venture to give himself up wholly, or for the most part, to the composition of oratorios. Mr. Haweis argues that the people of England, as well as the Court, were with Handel against the mass of the aristocracy throughout his misfortunes, and that every time he threw himself upon the people by soliciting their patronage in concerts to retrieve his reverses, they readily and generally responded to his appeal. His music was played to such an extent, and was found so attractive at Vauxhall, that the proprietor had a statue, by Roubiliac, erected to the com-

poser, who was "the great Mr. Handel," within these grounds. Neither were there wanting discriminating members of the aristocracy who kept aloof from cabals and supported Handel against his often brilliant, but even on their own ground of operas, decidedly inferior rivals. In such diaries as that of Mrs. Delany, one reads of many cultivated men and women who stood with constancy by Mr. Handel. Neither did the intellect of the country fail him, to the credit of the musical taste of such men as Pope, Fielding, and Hogarth. They wrote and painted up the genius that a powerful party in the country were seeking to drag down. They occupied the pit of the opera, bought Handel's concert tickets, and subscribed to have his operas engraved.*

Handel had followed the representation of *Esther* by writing and having represented the oratorio of *Deborah*, finished on the anniversary of his baptism in 1733. *Deborah* was also so far successful, and when Handel completed the success by writing the oratorio of *Athalie*, to be represented at Oxford, so great was the impression produced at the University, that there was a proposal to confer on Handel the degree of Doctor of Music, a degree which the plain-spoken German refused in terms not very flattering to English doctors of music. He would not "trow away" his money (referring to the small fee which he would have to pay) "for dat which de blockheads wish, but Handel no want."—No doubt it was a consolation, though perhaps also a source of exasperation to Handel, that he retained a strong ineradicable conviction of his own great powers.

In spite of *Esther*, *Deborah* (which was represented

* Haweis.

at the Haymarket) and *Athalie*, or rather because of the tribute of well-deserved praise paid to them, Handel's foes at the rival Lincoln's Inn Theatre waxed more and more rampant, flaunted all the greatest Italian singers in their castes, carried every thing before them, until even Handel succumbed. After confining the celebration of his Oratorios to Lent, writing the music to *Alexander's Feast*, and trying more Italian operas, including one in honour of the marriage of Frederic, Prince of Wales, Handel, in 1737, when he was fifty-two years of age, became bankrupt, and closed his theatre. He had a fit of apoplexy and meditated returning to Germany, where his blind mother had died several years before, on the fated day to him of the 24th February. Five-and-twenty years had passed since Handel, in the early flower of manhood, in the possession of undoubted genius, and buoyed up by court and popular favour, had come to settle in England, which, after being storm-tossed there for a score of years, he was abandoning a wrecked man. But England had not done with Handel, nor he with England; he was to come back to it and face its factions anew, pay every penny of the debts which his forbearing creditors did not fear to trust to his honesty, strike out new achievements, and make a third fortune, and finish his life in independence and honour, leaving behind him an undying name.

When a resort to the waters of Aix-la-Chapelle worked like a miracle on his constitution, he at once resigned the idea of withdrawing to Germany, and reappeared in England full of fresh zeal and capacity, in time to write the magnificent anthem for the funeral of Queen Caroline. He made a final unsuccessful effort at operatic success,

which plunged him anew in such difficulties that he was threatened with arrest; he redeemed himself so far, by a great concert, and in one year—that of 1739, when Handel was fifty-four years of age—he composed the oratorio of *Saul* (which includes the pathos of the scenes between David and Jonathan, the dramatic power of the meeting of Saul with the witch of Endor, and the widely known "Dead March,") and the great oratorio of *Israel in Egypt*, which was written "in the incredibly short space of twenty-seven days."* Critics hold this oratorio "the mighty masterpiece," though it has by no means been the most popular of the oratorios of Handel, in whose lifetime it was only produced nine times. Mr. Haweis points to its twenty-eight majestic choruses, including the renowned "Hailstone Chorus," and its fine duet, "The Lord is a Man of War," in vindication of the opinion. Still, so far as material gain was concerned, these oratorios, even in the case of *Saul*, had a very languid success; indeed, the wonder now is, that in the state of the musical taste of the generation, the stately and sublime music of these oratorios could be listened to, far less appreciated. Even Handel's next attempt, far nearer the comprehension of the time, his Cantatas of *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, ed Il Moderata*, were but lightly valued. But the change was coming, when Handel was invited by the Duke of Devonshire, then Viceroy of Ireland, to visit Dublin; and when in preparation for that visit, Handel wrote his oratorios of the *Messiah* and *Samson*.

The composer was well received in Dublin, in the

* "No one who has looked at all into the history of music and the biography of musicians can have failed to notice that the greatest composers have been the most prolific."—HULLAH.

autumn of 1741; and after several concerts, and the performance of *Esther*, he brought out his oratorio of the *Messiah*, which, unlike his other oratorios, was to meet with enraptured welcome, as it was to remain his great stronghold in public favour. In April, 1742, when Handel was in his fifty-eighth year, its first celebration took place. It was in behalf of the prisoners for debt in the various Dublin prisons; so that, in Mr. Haweis' apt words, its performance "literally proclaimed liberty to the captive." Nothing could exceed the enthusiasm of the audience; and to enable their numbers to be increased by a hundred, the "ladies of fashion consented for that night to leave their hoops at home."

Handel had at last some compensation for the long years in which he had laboured, so far as appearances went, in vain. The proceeds of the performance amounted to four hundred pounds, and on Handel's repeating it prior to his departure from Ireland, in August, it was again hailed with acclamation. Emboldened by this late attainment of his end, Handel had the *Messiah* represented in London under the title of *A new Sacred Oratorio*, in March, 1743, but so hard was the victory to win, and so fixed in some quarters the hostility to the master, that the oratorio was so coolly received that it was laid aside for two years, then represented again twice without any satisfactory result; and it was not till 1750, eight years after it had been first performed in Dublin, and when Handel was sixty-five years of age, that the oratorio of the *Messiah* was met in London with the admiration and delight it merited.

In the interval Handel had taken Covent Garden Theatre for subscription performances; brought out

*Samson** and other oratorios during Lent; and wrote his famous *Te Deum* for the victory of Dettingen. For the last time the adversity which had so long dogged his steps overtook him. He announced twenty-four subscription performances in the winter of 1744-5, which were so ill-attended, that he had to stop them at the close of the sixteenth; and the loss sustained reduced him, for the second time, to bankruptcy. But his creditors had justifiable faith in a man whose misfortunes were not caused by folly or excess, and who so gallantly and steadfastly defied them.

Handel was permitted to continue his efforts, and, in 1746, he brought out the suggestive oratorio—the motive supplied by the victory of Culloden—of *Judas Maccabæus*. Its origin was certain to command a certain amount of public approval. In the oratorio occurs the fine and now well-known chorus of "See the conquering hero comes;" but this chorus was not in the original oratorio, it was abstracted from the subsequently written oratorio of *Joshua*, and introduced into that of *Judas Maccabæus* two years after its first performance.†

Handel's fortunes brightened more and more till, in 1750, after the first triumphant celebration of his *Messiah* in London, when the representation was repeated in the following month for the benefit of the Foundling Hospital, Handel was in circumstances to present the hospital with the organ at which he presided on the occasion.

* "Handel's *Samson*," Moscheles exclaims, "which always strengthens and elevates my soul! The first time I heard it I was in ecstasies of delight; since then I have heard every rehearsal and performance of this masterpiece, and always found myself refreshed anew."

† "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

He continued composing oratorios and the English opera of *Alcestis* till 1751, when in the course of writing *Jephtha*, the last oratorio which proceeded from his hand, the first symptoms of such blindness as had befallen Bach, and which, in Handel's case, was an inheritance from his mother, presented themselves. He hurried to complete his work, and succeeded in the effort before the darkness became total and final; for his eyes were three times couched in vain. It is said that, in his desire to preserve his fame, he wished to deposit his MSS. in the Bodleian Library, Oxford; but was hampered by a bequest in a will which he had already made, leaving his papers, together with the harpsichord and organ on which he was accustomed to play, and five hundred pounds, to his secretary and old friend Schmidt, or Smith, to whom he had also presented a thousand pounds. Handel communicated his change of purpose to Smith, and proposed to indemnify him by the gift of three thousand pounds; but Smith indignantly refused the compromise. Handel was at first so much touched by the musical and friendly enthusiasm of his compatriot, that the master yielded up his own intention, and added a codicil to his will, securing to his secretary an additional fifteen hundred pounds. Eventually, however, this or some other question occasioned a violent quarrel, the scene of which was Tunbridge Wells, between the two old friends, so that, although Handel retained the services of Smith's son as his amanuensis, it was some time before he became reconciled to the elder Smith. One is glad to think that a reconciliation was effected at last, by means of the younger Smith, after Handel had composed the last of his numerous works in the duet and chorus "Sion now her

head," for introduction into *Judas Maccabæus*, and very shortly before the representation of the *Messiah* in London, in 1759, on which occasion the blind and aged Handel—who could never hear the air which he had himself allotted to the blind Samson of his oratorio of that name without emotion—presided for the last time publicly at the organ. Handel, whose health was rapidly failing, had expressed a desire that he might die on Good Friday and rise on Easter morning to meet his Redeemer. His dangerous illness and death close upon the date specified, led to the belief that his hope had been fulfilled; but, according to the latest records, he really died on the Saturday following Good Friday. He was buried, according to another wish which lay near to the heart of the great master, in Westminster Abbey.

Handel had never married. Much of the fortune which was his in the end, was transferred, in his lifetime, to charitable institutions. Mr. Haweis describes the composer, in the last and lucrative portion of his career, driving home at night "in a coach quite heavy with bags of silver and gold;" but these bags found their way not unfrequently to the "Society for the Sons of the Clergy," the "Society for Poor Musicians," and the "Foundling Hospital;" to the two last charities Handel was a specially generous benefactor. Handel's MSS. passed from the elder Smith to his son, and by him were presented to Handel's warm admirer George III., who had been taken as a boy by his grandfather to hear Handel's music, and to whom Handel had said, in gratified response to the child's appreciation, "a good boy, a good boy! you shall protect my fame when I am dead." The service was to be mutual; for while to George III. was due the splendid commemoration centenary of Handel's birth, held, in 1784,

in Westminster Abbey, which was the prelude to the celebration of the centenary of Handel's death, at the Crystal Palace,* in 1859, and to the Handel festivals which have followed, the opera of *Giulio Cesare* was revived for the purpose of diverting the mind of the good old king in his madness; and even in the last stages of that terrible malady, when blindness was added to madness, he was still capable of deriving solace from hearing and playing Handel's music.

The sculptor Roubiliac executed two representations of Handel; as it happened, Roubiliac's first and his last piece of work in England. The earlier statue, which has been referred to, was for Vauxhall Gardens; the later monument is in the Poet's corner, Westminster Abbey, and is probably familiar to my readers. The face was copied from a cast taken a few hours after Handel's death, and is reckoned an excellent likeness of the composer. A marble bust of Handel in the Foundling Hospital is another good version of the lineaments of the master. In addition to other statues and busts, Mr. Haweis mentions more than fifty pictures of Handel which are known to exist. In the picture by Hudson, Handel is represented in the full-dress of the period, with sword, silk breeches, and pigeon-breasted coat embroidered with gold. It need not be said that he wears his great wig. In his prime Handel was a portly figure. His face was massive and double-chinned, like Bach's. His brow, nose, and eyes were good; but it was his mouth which, above all, redeemed his face from either coarseness or hardness, for when it was not screwed

* "Fancy old Handel standing and conducting his gigantic works in this gigantic place!" writes Moscheles of a Handel representation in the Crystal Palace.

and twisted in keeping with the heavy cheeks, all dragged and quivering with irascibility, it had much of the sweetness of benevolence in its delicate lines. In character Handel was notably an honest and honourable man in the middle of almost overwhelming difficulties. He was not only just, but kind and generous, and true to a degree that his despotism and irritability could not seriously impair, far less destroy. His sincere, earnest devoutness vindicated itself to the last, in the resignation with which he bore his blindness, and in the mellowing and softening, rather than blasting and crushing, effect of age and affliction on his character.

In the judgment of German critics, not only Handel's operas, but all his oratorios, with the exception of one, were epic or heroic; that one exception, the *Messiah*, is his single example of purely "sacred music." The chief characteristic of his music is said to be grandeur as opposed to "sickly sentimentality," and his grandeur, which is produced by simple means, rises to its greatest height in choruses.*

Beethoven said of Handel, "I would uncover my head and kneel down on his tomb." Haydn, when at a performance of the *Messiah* in Westminster Abbey, was nearly overpowered by its sublime strains, and wept like a child (Schindler). Handel's influence on his successors, however, is considered less than that of "Bach, Mozart, Haydn, or Beethoven." †

Christoph Willibald Ritter von Gluck was born in 1714 at Weidenwang, in the Upper Palatinate, on the

* Moscheles refers to the English audiences' habit of involuntarily rising at the "Hallelujah Chorus."

† Pauer.

borders of Bohemia. His father was huntsman to Prince Lobkowitz. While his son was still young, the elder Gluck quitted the Prince's service and removed to Prague, which was then one of the musical centres among the cities of Germany. There seems no foundation for the statement, that young Gluck's educational advantages, especially in the matter of music, were slender, since he was trained till the age of eighteen in the Jesuit College at Kommotau,* where he was taught, among other things, to play the organ, the harpsichord, and the violin; the last he played so well as to enable him to earn his livelihood by it, while he also acted as organist at the convent of St. Agnes. In 1736, when Gluck was twenty-two years of age, he went to Vienna to study under the masters there. According to Mr. Haweis, Gluck's father's old master introduced the lad to an Italian, Prince Melzi, who took Gluck with him to Milan. Gluck produced his first opera on the Italian model for La Scala, Milan, and continued to write Italian operas—all more or less forgotten—till he was summoned to London about 1742 (the date is disputed), when he was at least twenty-six, and not twenty-two years of age, as is sometimes stated, to serve in the band of the faction who so long opposed Handel, and to act as a rival to his great countryman. In coming on such an errand, Gluck was less modest than a third German, Hasse of Dresden, who, on being solicited to lend his services to establish the opera in London, observed, "Then Handel is dead?" When told to the contrary, Hasse refused wisely and with generous indignation to compete with the first composer of his day (Haweis).

Gluck was both confident in temper and loud in as-

* Haweis.

serting his rights; but he was by no means beyond the discretion of recognising a check and acting upon it. Whether or not he heard that Handel, after listening to one of his operas, said of the author, that he knew no more of counterpoint than Handel's cook, Gluck let himself be convinced that his utmost efforts in the line of Italian operas, which he was then pursuing, would prove a failure when directed against the works of the composer of *Saul* and *Israel in Egypt*, and withdrew from the contest returning by Copenhagen to Vienna. Gluck's defeat in this instance conferred on him and on music the lasting benefit of concentrating his attention on what was wanting in the operas of the day. Choir-singing and organ-playing had already been brought to very considerable perfection in Germany; but orchestras were still in their infancy, and the common idea of the opera founded on the Italian school, was to tell a story by numerous songs set to airs selected for their intrinsic beauty, but having little reference to the story or supposed circumstances of the singers. It is said that Gluck, in his improvements, only returned to the first principles of the opera, which, when it was originated, had been intended to vindicate the emotional against the merely scientific element in music —an element which had been twice carried to excess and abuse by the learned ingenuity of the first composers of part music, and later by the entire submission of music to the vagaries of vocal skill.

Gluck had already been in Paris, and had been struck by the peculiar excellence of the French opera, which was finished declamation in recitation. The development of this quality, together with the strict adaptation of the whole music to the "expression of the tale which the

words told," was to be thenceforth sedulously cultivated by Gluck, and was to be the key to his achievements. After leading for some time a quiet, studious life in Vienna, and bringing out several operas which were simply progressive, Gluck was happy in meeting at the crisis of his life and his project a man who was well fitted to help him to carry it to a complete success. This was a poet named Calzabigi, who was to write the librettos of the finest of Gluck's operas. The first of these great operas was *Orpheus*, or, under its Italian name, *Orfeo ed Eurydice*, on the old mythologic story. It was brought out in Vienna in 1762, when Gluck was forty-eight years of age, and immediately stamped its author as a great composer and the herald of a new era in music. The opera was also, what is rare in the circumstances, a material success of the most triumphant description.

The following year, after the reproduction of *Orpheus* at Parma, on the occasion of the marriage of the beautiful and foredoomed Infanta Isabella, or Elizabeth (according to the Spanish or German version of her name), Gluck wrote for the private Court theatre what may be called a family opera, since the parts were taken by the artistic sons and daughters of Maria Theresa and her emperor. No doubt such a composition was a slight exercise, as well as a monopoly of Gluck's powers, in proof of which, the opera has not become public property; but what a galaxy of great names, and what associations both of tragedy and comedy, that imperial operatic troop call up! There were the high-born and brilliant princes and princesses in the light-hearted days in which they designed and fitted up the Palace of Schönbrunn, and who were yet to see, in repeated instances, sad and strange

reverses. Joseph II. was not yet crushed by the imperial crown, and the imperious necessity which it brought to him of enlarging the bounds and elevating the condition of nations that were not prepared for enlargement and elevation. Joseph's young wife, the Infanta of Parma, was still the delight of his eyes, while drooping from the first under the cruel prophecy which wrought out its own fulfilment. Marie Antoinette had not departed to be received with open arms by all France, as the bride of Louis le Désiré, ere she mounted the tumbril which dragged her through the streets of Paris, following Louis' footsteps to the guillotine. She was still the lively, attached pupil of Gluck. Caroline of Naples was there in but a thoughtless, plump instalment of her future extreme folly and fat, which she was to carry—of all places—into the ship of the English admiral, Lord Nelson. And presiding over all was Maria Theresa, whom the Hungarians called their "king;" the wars of whose succession deluged Europe in blood; whose beauty in youth was contrasted by her ugliness in age, but whose warm, gallant, impulsive heart, so true and tender to Charles of Lorraine, beat always the same.

But Gluck did not remain contented with his Viennese success and the Court patronage. His inclinations and his destiny called him to Paris after composing *Alceste*, another of his great operas, and an additional opera which has fallen into comparative oblivion, still hankering after that excellence of French recitative which had caught his fancy, while he believed he could wed it to finer, fuller harmony. He wrote for the French stage an adaptation of Racine's *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and carried it to Paris. Contradictory accounts state, on the one hand, that he was

warmly welcomed by the directors of the French opera; on the other hand, that he would not have received a hearing had it not been for his old pupil, Marie Antoinette, who had become in the interval Dauphiness of France, and who supported him cordially, as she was wont to support what reminded her of her native country and her early home. Her support, however, had the ill-effect of drawing down upon the composer the enmity of Madame du Barry, the old King Louis XV.'s evil favourite, and, with her hostility, the king's hostility.

Be that as it may, *Iphigénie en Aulide* was represented in Paris in 1774 (when Gluck was sixty years of age), in the presence of Marie Antoinette and her Court, and was hailed with popular as well as princely acclamation.

Mr. Haweis seeks to explain the curious contradiction, in the case of Gluck, of French favour for German music—a contradiction which, except in the instance of Haydn, was in opposition to general experience—by the approach of the Revolution and the state of ferment and eager awakening to everything new in which the intellect of France at that time found itself. But the intellect of France was not wholly on the side of Gluck in the musical strife which the faction of Madame du Barry gave rise to in Paris, and which soon rivalled the strife in London between Handel and his opponents. Rousseau espoused the cause of Gluck; but Marmontel, La Harpe, and D'Alembert supported the claims of Piccini, the Italian composer who was brought to Paris to outstrip the German. Marmontel wrote for the Italian an adaptation of the dream of "Rolande," which Gluck had already chosen for a subject—an unfortunate coincidence which made the feud between the composers rage more fiercely. At last

the manager of the theatre bethought himself of the device for securing the patronage of both rival parties to his house, that he should have successive works on the same subject by the two composers represented in a kind of competition for the award of superiority. The subject chosen was *Iphigénie en Tauride*. The Italian Piccini had his opera performed first, and it had its day of success. In the meantime, Gluck had retired to Vienna to compose his music for the libretto, which was already written.* On his return to Paris, in 1779, Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* was performed, when its composer was sixty-five years of age, and outshone at once and very far the rival performance. Gluck's high rank as a composer was permanently established. He wrote another opera, and projected still another, before he went to Vienna in 1780; but his health was failing so rapidly, that he relinquished the task to a subordinate. In 1784 he had an apoplectic fit, from which he rallied and lingered three years. Gluck died in 1787 in Vienna, at the age of seventy-three years.

The German traditions of "Ritter Gluck" represent him as a man of courtly elegance and great serenity of manners, wearing a smile when his face was at rest,† and having large white and very well made hands. French traditions reproduce him as vain, passionate, and impatient of rivalry; but the truth seems to be that, though confident and irascible, he was, in the main, not egotistic or ungenerous, and that while able to make a fortune, and "while putting some weight on money, he was at the same time capable both of benevolence and hospitality. An old, broken-down man,

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

† Mr. Haweis writes, on the contrary, of "Gluck's eager, restless, ambitious face."

he sat in a box and applauded the young Mozart's new symphonies." As a man Gluck, who was "severe and conscientious" as a composer, was reserved and self-sufficing, numbering few but those firm friends. In his prime he is said to have shown "a good example" to the corrupt French capital "of moderation and self-respect." But after his constitution gave way under long-continued and excessive labour in his art, and he became a prey to nervous maladies, he had the misery of sullying the honourable example which he had once afforded, by becoming self-indulgent and dissipated in his habits.

He had married, but was childless. He had adopted a niece Marianna, from whose operatic singing great things were expected; but her early death, which occurred eleven years before his own, in the middle of Gluck's first Parisian success, was a heavy loss, both personally and professionally, to the composer. Gluck, besides winning the admiration and respect of the whole world of art, made a fair fortune, leaving behind him about twenty-four thousand pounds. He received the honour of knighthood either during his stay in Paris, or in his earlier connection with the Austrian Court.

His greatest work, very nearly his last, is *Iphigénie en Tauride*, which is a standard work in Germany, and has been several times represented in England; next to it in merit are his *Orphée*, which has also been produced in London,—*Alceste*, *Iphigénie en Aulide*, and *Armide*. Gluck's chief excellences were the dramatic truth and power which he lent to operatic music, and the introduction from a French model of highly wrought and artistically declaimed recitative. The point in which critics differ in his achievements is, whether he did or did not, in a degree,

sacrifice the great end of melody, to the secondary end of dramatic unity and strength.

I shall quote a graphic and sympathetic account of the first representation of the *Orpheus* at Vienna:—

"The composer, whose work drew this large audience, was coming back to Vienna in the full manhood of his genius, after two years of absence. He brought with him new inspirations, which were the fruit of a beautiful life of industry, a wholesome and original taste, and a bold, independent spirit, which raised him above his conventional contemporaries. Perhaps Gluck had not more genius than the other composers of operas of his time, but why has he survived them? Why does he still delight us, when even the giant Handel has ceased to live in his operas? Where are Hasse's astounding forty-and-nine, said to have been loved as our Rossini's are by us? and those of Scarlatti and the Padre Martini, from whom such gems of melody have come down to us? Precious pedants, flesh and blood will not stand you! Gluck's secret was to be natural. . . . . It was many years later, in Paris, that the antagonism between the Piccinists and Gluckists was carried on; but in 1762, in Vienna, when *Orfeo ed Eurydice* was given for the first time, the enthusiasm of all Germany drowned the voices of the Italian masters and singers, who exclaimed against the barbarism of the new writing for the voice. Already Gluck was a favourite with the Court, so that the theatre was filling with a gay crowd as our friends take their seats, and Josquin's eyes were roaming among the fashionable boxes to see the arrival of the Lichtenbergs, when a slight applause filled the house, greeting the arrival of the composer, who took his post at the harpsichord. He had missed seeing

the great Gluck's face, but the overture began; he settled himself to listen with an effort—but in another minute Josquin was absorbed . . . .he was drinking in great music with all his might. . . . To our musician the fresh rush of instruments in the majestic allegro was a spell to break him away from himself, and the strong fresh overture prepared the hearers for the sublime story of the old Greek.

"The curtain rose; there was the tomb of Eurydice, dead, spite of her husband's mighty power; shepherds strewed with leaves and flowers, and Orpheus himself was stretched in despair over the funeral stone, his great lyre fallen from his hands; how loud swelled the dirge of the shepherds' chorus, and now, through it came piercing the cry of anguish from his lips, 'Eurydice!' There he remained alone; and entranced Josquin heard the tender air that follows, and the impassioned recitatives, wherein the music-god is wrought up to defy the power of death, and seek his wife at the gate of hell. Love appeared then, and in tender strains told of the sanction of the gods, and with a great major burst of song, accompanied by rushing violins, Orpheus departs for the land of spirits.

"We read how these wonderful recitatives struck Gluck's Italian contemporaries with scorn. Josquin thought of Hasse, and nearly laughed aloud. His heart was leaping up in joyful recognition of the master whom he felt from henceforth he must serve. . . . . When the curtain drew up again there was disclosed the heart of the infernal regions, and Pluto, like Satan in a miracle play, leaped with a thump on the boards. There was something quaint, and almost mediæval, in the jumble of the scene; but the audience, like children, on this first representation

rewarded the manager with a burst of applause. . . . . Indeed, that severely simple music will speak to the intelligence of a child—the thrilling fury chorus and dance; the divine prayer and harp accompaniments of Orpheus, interrupted by the sonorous 'No' of the hell chorus; then the dreamy music of the blest, the meeting of Orpheus with his beloved. . . . The audience were now worked up to enthusiasm, and there yet remained the great song, the chef-d'œuvre of Gluck, 'Che faro senza Eurydice.' When the last act was over, the whole house rang with applause." —*Alcestis.*

Franz Joseph Haydn was born at the village of Rohrau, on the Austrian border of Hungary, in 1732. His father was in a humbler station than that of Gluck's father. Matthias Haydn was but a mechanic, plying the craft of a cartwright, while his wife had been a cook in the family of a Count Harrach. But neither Matthias nor his Anne Marie, in their humble, honest circumstances, were altogether deficient in those tastes and acquirements which were to mould the dawning career of their great son. Matthias was able to play both the organ in the little village church, and a harp—to his accompaniment on which Anne Marie sang at home; and we are told that the great recreation of the young couple on Sundays and saints' days was the practising together of their music. The tale affords us a pleasant glimpse into primitive musical German households, a glimpse which is completed by the mention of the little son of the family, when in his sixth year, joining with great glee in the simple concerts, though his part was only to keep time to the principal performers on a little sham fiddle. It is not often that such common childish mimicry leads to any remarkable

result, or can be held clearly indicative of latent talent; but in the case of little Franz Joseph Haydn it was coming events casting their shadows before. Another Franz, probably the child's godfather, as he was a relative of the elder Haydn's, was in the superior circumstances of a schoolmaster in Hamburg, and was so struck by the correctness, as well as the enthusiasm, with which the little boy beat time and joined in the song, that the elder Franz adopted the younger for the time, removed him to the schoolmaster's home and school, and taught the boy to read, write, and master the rudiments of Latin, and to play on a real violin and several other musical instruments.*

The Kapell-Meister of St. Stephen's, Vienna, Reuter, being on a tour in search of voices for his choir, came to Hamburg in 1740, and picked up little Haydn, then only in his ninth year. Mr. Haweis adds an incident of the boy Haydn's introduction to Reuter. "The schoolmaster had boasted of his little pupil's gifts, and Franz Joseph had sung to the stranger. At the close of his song the delighted Reuter cried 'Bravo! But, my little man, how is it you cannot shake?' 'How can you expect me to shake when Herr Franck himself cannot?' replied the *enfant terrible*. 'Come here, then;' and drawing the child to him, he showed him how to manage his breath, and then make the necessary vibrations in his throat once or twice; and the boy caught the trick, and began shaking like a practised singer."

As a chorister in Vienna Haydn had to practise two hours a day, besides singing publicly in the choir; but the two hours' practice by no means exhausted the boy's ar-

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

dent desire to make progress in his art. We are distinctly told that he had no assistance from the Kapell-Meister while he pursued his study of music, until, when he was thirteen years of age, and still untaught in composition, he wrote a mass, at which Reuter, the Kapell-Meister, laughed. But Haydn, naturally sanguine, as he was one-idead, was not to be discouraged, and having spent a small sum, which his father had granted him for the mending of his clothes, on buying two works on music of the time, and having, as he judged, conned and digested the treatises, he proceeded with boyish audacity to try their final feats by attempting to write music in sixteen parts, only to be again laughed at by the unsympathetic Reuter, and bidden write music in two before he wrote it in sixteen parts. While he was still in the choir Haydn wrote his first stringed quartett, at the age of eighteen years.

Haydn's unsatisfactory relations with Reuter—the most thwarting experience in a life which was singularly smooth and prosperous, forming a fitting accompaniment to the character of a man, who was from youth to age as easy and kindly as he was industrious—were rudely terminated. Haydn's voice having ceased to be of use to the choir, and the lad, then in a restless transition stage of his history, having committed the piece of mischief of cutting off the tail of the wig of another singer, he suffered the severe punishment of being "expelled from the choir on a moment's notice," and thrown out of board, lodging, and occupation, alone in the street on a winter's night* in 1751, when he was nineteen years of age. This was, doubtless, the hardest adventure through which Haydn

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

was called to pass; but even in this instance his good luck, or, rather, his faith in Providence, with his happy faculty of making friends, did not forsake him, though he was called upon to endure for some months the straits of pinching poverty, which, for that matter, none could have borne better than the busy, joyous lad. A wig-maker, named Keller, who chanced to know Haydn, and who had, besides his single family-room, a loft at his disposal, charitably offered the penniless, houseless lad a seat at his table and a bed in his loft, which, although it had neither fireplace nor window, was provided with the special inducement of a harpsichord, on which Haydn could earn his way to occupation, emolument, and reputation. The wig-maker's offer was gratefully accepted, and in the fireless loft, sometimes with the sheets of music in bed, to keep himself from freezing in the bitter cold of a Vienna winter, and, as often as the weather would allow him, at the harpsichord,* Haydn puzzled and struggled to acquire the principles of construction, or "form," in music, from the first six sonatas of Emmanuel Bach, which had come into Haydn's possession. So well did he accomplish his purpose, that the future master of symphony and founder of modern instrumental music was wont to attribute, with the frank generosity which was so essential a characteristic of the man, all that he made out for himself and imparted to others to that solitary study of Emmanuel Bach, who was but the echo of the principles of harmony conceived and developed by Bach's greater father.

While lodging with Keller, a lodging which, by-the-bye, —so closely are good and evil influences and results

* According to Mr. Haweis, Haydn also assisted to dress and powder wigs, downstairs, for his living.

linked together in this world—was in the end productive of the greatest misfortune in the composer's life, Haydn got pupils, and wrote music for their use, besides composing his first German opera of *Der Kummer Teufel*, in execution of a commission from the manager of a small theatre, who had heard Haydn perform a serenade in one of the streets of Vienna. We have an amusing account of this commission by Mr. Haweis :—"At night the young minstrel, accompanied by two friends, used to wander about the streets of Vienna by moonlight, and serenade with trios of his composition his friends and patrons. One night he happened to stop under the window of Bernardone Curtz, the director of the theatre. Down rushed the director in a state of great excitement. 'Who are you?' he shrieked. 'Joseph Haydn.' 'Whose music is it?' 'Mine!' 'The deuce it is!—at your age, too!' 'Why, I must begin with something.' 'Come along, upstairs;' and the enthusiastic director collared his prize, and was soon deep in explaining the mysteries of a libretto entitled *The Devil on Two Sticks*. Haydn must write music for it according to Curtz's directions. It was no easy task; the music was to represent all sorts of things — catastrophes, fiascos, tempests. The tempest brought Haydn to his wits' end, for neither he nor Curtz had ever witnessed a sea-storm. Haydn sat at the piano, banging away in despair; behind him stood the director, fuming and raving, and explaining what he did not understand to Haydn, who did not understand him. At last, in a state of distraction, the pianist, opening wide his arms, and raising them aloft, brought down his fists simultaneously on the two extremities of the keyboard, and then drawing them rapidly together till they met, made a

clean sweep of all the notes. 'Bravo! bravo! that's it—that's the tempest!' cried Curtz; and jumping wildly about, he finally threw his arms round the magician who had called the spirits from the vasty deep, and afterwards paid him one hundred and thirty florins for the music—storm at sea included."

Soon we hear of engagements to play the violin in a church in Vienna, and to play the organ in the private chapel of a nobleman; of Haydn's engaging to supply a musical accompaniment for a lady in the suite of the Venetian ambassador, because the Italian maestro, Porpora, was included in the lady's train, that he might serve as her music-master, when Haydn had the advantage of hearing the singing lessons of the old Italian, whom the young German was willing to serve in the humblest capacity so that he might win the maestro's notice;* of Haydn's playing and attracting some attention at the amateur music-parties of men of rank; and still of the Countess Thun finding considerable difficulty in seeking him out, after she had met with some of his music and had desired to know the composer, to whom, when she

* Mr. Haweis states that Haydn was introduced to the Venetian ambassador's household, in which Porpora taught, through the good offices of the dramatist Metastasio, who was then in Vienna, and who had happened to lodge in the same house with Haydn after the latter left the Kellers. Mr. Haweis goes on to state, that when Porpora, "a very crusty old gentleman," would have nothing to say to the obscure young German, Haydn thought nothing beneath his purpose of ingratiating himself with the man who could teach him what he lacked, but would clean Porpora's boots, trim his wig, brush his coat, run his errands, until, unable to resist so useful a satellite, the maestro consented that Haydn should become his "constant companion, disciple, and accompanyist," to the accompanyist's incalculable benefit, at that stage of his art.

discovered his indigent circumstances, she made a considerate gift of twenty-five ducats, besides granting him her patronage. At the age of twenty-eight years Haydn composed his first symphony.

Haydn was now on the eve of a phase of life peculiarly German—a phase which lasted long with him, since he filled for thirty years the office of second and first Kapell-Meister and Kammer Musikus to the Princes Anthony and Nicolas Esterhazy, father and son in a great Austrian house, whose patronage has done much service in its time to "the gentle science," and whose name is honourably associated with the great musical traditions of Germany. Here is an account, by Mr. Haweis, of the engagement of Haydn by the head of the Esterhazy family:—"'What! you don't mean to say that little blackamoor' (alluding to Haydn's brown complexion and small stature,) 'composed that symphony?' 'Surely, Prince!' replied the director Friedburg, beckoning to Joseph Haydn, who advanced towards the orchestra. 'Little Moor,' said the old gentleman, 'you shall enter my service. I am Prince Esterhazy. What's your name?' 'Haydn.' 'Ah, I've heard of you. Get along, and dress yourself like a *Capell-meister*. Clap on a new coat, and mind your wig is curled. You're too short; you shall have red heels; but they shall be high, that your stature may correspond with your merit.'"

During the thirty years that Haydn was in the service of the Esterhazy family he was accustomed to spend nine months of the year with his patrons in the country, at Eisenstadt, and the remaining three winter months in attendance upon the Prince in the capital. All Haydn's biographers and critics seem to agree in extolling the advantages of his situation at the time—his freedom from

worrying care and anxiety, the healthfulness of his country life, where he joined in the hunts and sports of the head of the house, the quiet and regularity which enabled Haydn —nay, the obligations of his service, which compelled him —to work steadily and daily, while his winter sojourn in Vienna, where the great city theatre took the place of the Prince of Esterhazy's theatre, afforded just the amount of stimulus and rivalry that were necessary to prevent a composer growing apathetic and careless, under a life of absolute security and unquestioned mastery of the field.

Even the discomforts and grievances of Haydn's domestic relations, when he married Anne Keller, a daughter of his old friend, the wig-maker (it is said in rueful compliance with a promise to become his son-in-law, after the elder daughter of the Keller family, whom Haydn had really loved, had entered a convent, and there was only left the younger daughter, with whom the pledged composer had neither character nor tastes in common), would appear to have been lightened by Haydn's partial domicile with his master, so that the composer was enabled, after a trial of wedded life which resulted in mutual unhappiness, to enter into an amicable arrangement with the narrow, austere, bitter Frau Haydn, and having secured to her an ample share of his salary, to devote himself thenceforth entirely to his patron, while she consented to dwell apart and follow her own view of life.

Yet, with all deference to the authorities cited, I must hold that such a life as Haydn led throughout his youth and prime could only have been agreeable to him and good for him under certain peculiar conditions. In the first place, the lines between princely and even noble German families of the day and their retainers were so deep and strong, that

the most revolutionary spirit could not dream of surmounting them, so that much misunderstanding and awkwardness were at once avoided. In the second place, Haydn's was no revolutionary, but the most loyal, docile spirit, and he had none of the stern independence and fiery ambition which would have caused many another German, and most Englishmen, to have chafed under the inevitable bonds and restraints of his position. In the third place, Haydn was even marvellously industrious, and withal the Esterhazy household must have been generous and indulgent to their Kapell-Meister. (As an instance of their attachment, it is recorded that when Haydn's house in the little country town of Eisenstadt was accidentally burnt down in his absence, the Prince, though he could not restore the precious manuscripts which perished in the fire, had the house rebuilt and refurnished at his own cost, as a surprise to the composer on his return home.) Without such indulgence, even the industry and musical enthusiasm of Haydn could not have stood the incessant demands made on his powers; at least they must have been frittered away and wasted in the effort to respond to the appeal. To give an idea of Haydn's duties, and a proof that his place was no sinecure, I may mention that operas were performed twice a week at the Esterhazy theatre, for which Haydn was expected as a rule to supply the score; that he had to direct an orchestral concert every afternoon, for which he was also bound to furnish the pieces; that every morning he had to greet his master at his reception with a fresh sheet of composition; and that, above and beyond these perpetually recurring occasions, he had to be supplied with an inexhaustible fund of music for water-parties, birth-days, impromptu concerts and dances, &c., &c. Haydn's admirers are per-

suaded that the incessant practice was good for him; but great and sound equanimity and contentment of temperament, and almost limitless fertility of composition, with considerable grace granted by the princely employers, must all have come into action, else the very abundance of the practice would have swamped even so buoyant and robust a man as Haydn.

It will be well for us to comprehend the degree to which German life was and is interpenetrated with music, before we go on to consider the lives of other great German composers. A graphic as well as graceful description of the life of an old Kammer Musikus is given in an interesting book, from which I have already quoted, and in which, by-the-way, the author's opinion coincides with my own on the generally detrimental effect on the composition of great music of a life so full of minor obligations and distractions as was Haydn's. But here is its pleasanter side most agreeably described:—"In the beautiful September mornings, when the sunlight fell into the great music-hall on dancing marbles, wondrous landscapes from Holland, precious stuffs and flashing majolica wares, where the windows opened on to all the gay buzz and beauty of the gardens, when the butterflies chased each other among the hollyhocks, and the dahlias flaunted in rows, the little band would sit for hours at the harpsichord, singing and studying the music Josquin had written for them. There would be the young composer leading, modest and firm; there the handsome prince-tenor, shouting with head in the air, altos and basses circling round; Cécile, softened and exquisite, singing her part with a will; amongst them all, the Count, thrumming away at his violoncello, kind and ecstatic. Alas, for such an impractical excellency!

Even while he thrums and prepares all for a gay music-meeting in his soft Boccacio gardens, a terrible cry of war is coming over the harvest-fields. . . . an army advancing within a few leagues of the hapless city of art."—(*Alcestis.*) A less agreeable illustration of the Kammer Musikus's life is that which represents the young composer roused from his lawful sleep at an unearthly hour in the morning, to play an accompaniment to the elegant, pointless composition with which the Prince has been wiling away the hours of a sleepless night.

In 1775, when Haydn was forty-three years of age, he completed his oratorio of *Tobia*, which had been begun seven years before. Twenty years after he worked again at this *Tobia*, which had been produced on its completion in Vienna, and was repeatedly represented there for the benefit of the widows of musicians. It is said that Haydn's fame, while still unknown to himself, and while he continued to live with perfect satisfaction as a simple retainer in the dignified privacy of the Esterhazy household, had spread over Europe; and now he was called upon to write symphonies for Paris concerts, now to compose music to the "seven last words of the Redeemer," for the solemn celebration of the Passion at Cadiz, where this ceremony consisted in the bishop's enunciation of the words of the Divine Agony, after each of which one of these deeply pathetic pieces was performed.* To this work additions were made by Haydn's younger brother Michael, a good musician in his day, but whose reputation is lost in that of his greater brother. At last, in 1790 or 1791, shortly after the death of Prince Nicolas Esterhazy had broken the tie which had held Haydn at Eisenstadt, or Vienna, for so many

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

years, his rooms were suddenly invaded one day by an enterprising Englishman, Salaman, the violinist, who announced that he had come all the way from London to Vienna, to carry off Haydn to London to compose for the concerts of which Salaman was the director. Taken by surprise, and unaffectedly unassuming as Haydn was, he did not refuse the post at which, according to arrangements, Mozart, his junior, who had been Haydn's pupil, and for whom the old master entertained the most generous and tender respect, was to succeed him.

Accordingly, Haydn came first to London, after what was then held a stormy sea voyage, in 1791, when the composer was in his sixtieth year. He remained a number of months working at his symphonies, which were produced at the next spring concerts and received with unanimous applause and delight. Haydn had but time to return to Vienna, and take the house at Gumpendorf, which was thenceforth associated with him, when the lamented and premature death of Mozart, which had occurred when Haydn was in England, having overturned Salaman's plans, Haydn was recalled to London by a second profitable engagement in 1793, and the sensation which he produced was still greater, his success even more complete. Indeed his second visit, which lasted nearly a year, was so highly remunerative as to enable Haydn to retire to his native land in independent circumstances for the rest of his life, besides taking with him the degree of Doctor of Music from the University of Oxford, which this German, at once more urbane and conciliatory, and less tried by adversity, than Handel, did not refuse to accept.

Mr. Haweis gives some lively anecdotes of Haydn's sim-

plicity and *bonhomie*, when he occupied his lodgings in Great Pulteney Street, in the middle of the feasting and honour which he received from the king and the Prince of Wales downwards throughout the English capital. How Haydn writes of royalty and nobility seated on thrones, when he really means the Lord and Lady Mayoress at a city banquet; how he refers to a member of the English aristocracy as the "Duke of Lids;" how he pays his most enjoyable visit to another Vaterlander, in the person of Herschel, when the great astronomer solaces himself after his aërial researches by playing on a musical instrument, called, I think, the oboe, a performance which was not wonderful, seeing that Herschel began his life as a player in a Hanoverian military band.

Among Haydn's compositions in England were his famous canzonets and the cantata "Ariana in Naxos."

On Haydn's re-establishment in Vienna, a suggestion was made to him by an eccentric and enthusiastic baron, Von Schwieten,* who entertained the notion that a sense of "visible forms and motions" could be conveyed by music. This suggestion formed the idea of the oratorio of *The Creation*, for which Von Schwieten was to arrange passages of Scripture, intermixed with words of his own. Fallacious as the notion is generally believed to be, and unsuitable as the very grandest of the words used are to the occasion, Haydn seized upon the conception eagerly, and worked at it with such solemn earnestness as to secure for it immortality by his genius, and by the pains with which he consecrated that genius to the task, remarking as an explanation of his spending more time upon this than upon any other effort, "that he meant the work

* Formerly court physician to Maria Theresa.

to live long, and must not therefore hasten its production." He was, at least, a year engaged in the oratorio, and it was not till another year, 1799, when Haydn was sixty-seven years of age, that the oratorio was first represented in the Schwarzenburg Palace, Vienna. The oratorio met with the unvaryingly brilliant success which was the fortune of Haydn's works—a success in this case exceeding that of any single musical work which had preceded it. So great was the rivalry between Salaman and another musical director, Ashley, to be the first to give *The Creation* to an English public, that Ashley fell upon the device of employing a king's messenger, who travelled with exceptional advantages of speed, to bring privately to England the composer's score. It reached London on a Saturday night, and, having been copied and studied during the earlier days of the following week, was brought out at Covent Garden on the succeeding Friday, the 23rd March, 1800, a year and four days after the oratorio had been first represented in Vienna.*

A second oratorio which Haydn completed, with Von Schwieten adapting the libretto, was *The Seasons*, taken from Thomson's poem. The second oratorio, which occupied Haydn eleven months, was performed in Vienna, in 1801, about two years after the first performance of *The Creation* there, and, though well met, was not so triumphantly received as its predecessor. It was the last great work of Haydn, whose vigour of mind and body was failing him from mere exhaustion, so that he composed with difficulty, and was obliged to resign the position at the piano, which he had no longer strength to retain. Yet Haydn was able to be present at a grand representation of an

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

Italian version of *The Creation*, given in Vienna in 1808, when the composer was in his seventy-seventh year. It was likely to be the master's last public appearance in the city in which he had spent the greater part of his life, and with which the creation of his great works of genius was identified. Every grateful effort was made to render that last appearance an ovation. Vienna outdid her magnificent self in supporting her composer by the presence in a great gathering of all that was distinguished among her sons and daughters. Haydn was wheeled in a chair into the theatre; and, in remembrance of his old friendship with the house, a princess of Esterhazy sat by his side. The director of the orchestra bowed before the old composer, listening to his final instructions. It is said that in the midst of a murmured acclamation which attended the favourite passage, "Let there be light," the aged Haydn, in an ecstacy of devotion, stood up, pointing to heaven, and exclaiming aloud, "It comes from thence."* When, unable to hear the performance to the end, he was taken out, he caused his chair to be stopped on the threshold of so many well-won triumphs, and gazed and bowed his farewell to the public and his old friends and fellow-workers.

After that demonstration he did not quit his house; and in truth the life of the composer set in troublous times for Europe, and for Germany, and especially for Haydn's beloved city. Within little more than a year of the representation of *The Creation*, at which Haydn assisted, Vienna was bombarded by Napoleon; and though the great French soldier caused a guard of honour to be placed round the house of the composer, Napoleon could not guard Haydn's

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

faithful heart from the blow dealt to his loyalty and to the traditions of his whole life. When shells were bursting round the house, and Haydn was sinking into the merciful torpor which stole over him, it is reported that, rousing himself, by what appeared to the anxious and attached watchers almost a supernatural exertion, he went once again to his abandoned piano, and played and sang thrice "with clear emphatic voice" his testimony against the invaders, in the National Hymn—which he had long before composed in honour of his friend and sovereign—"God preserve the Emperor." Franz Joseph Haydn died in 1809, in his seventy-eighth year.

In character, Haydn was true, kind, and unworldly, though he shared somewhat in the lax morals of his generation. So far from grudging the fame of his contemporaries, he took the lead in paying the most ardent homage to his junior, Mozart, refusing even to enter into competition with him when Mozart's *Figaro* was electrifying Munich.

At a later period, when it had been fixed that the two should succeed each other in working for the London concerts, and when Haydn's spiteful wife endeavoured to make mischief between the friends, by writing to Haydn that Mozart had been speaking ill of him, Mr. Haweis tells us that Haydn stoutly refused to believe the malicious story, and preserved his regard for Mozart unimpaired to the end. Mr. Haweis quotes the affectionate title which Mozart bestowed on his senior of "Papa Haydn."

With Beethoven, whom Haydn liked to rank among his scholars, Haydn's relations were less satisfactory, and Beethoven was wont to declare that he had learnt nothing

during his short period of instruction from the old master.* Haydn was in his own way, and according to his own light, sincerely religious. He would write at the top of his composition, "In the name of the Lord," and at their close, "To the praise of God." When his invention failed him, he would tell his rosary and say his prayers, which he recommended as a sure source of inspiration, since God, on being sought, restored to his creature his gift. Haydn's temper was naturally sweet and joyous, and although in his old age fits of sadness overcame him, he would rouse himself from them and regain all his native cheerfulness; and nothing could exceed the simple resignation with which after labouring long at his last quartet, and being unable to accomplish more than two movements, he set to them the pathetic phrase, "Hin ist alle meine Kraft; alt und schwach bin ich" (Gone is all my power; old and weak am I), and sent it round to his various friends.

I have already mentioned Haydn's unsurpassed industry in daily composition. It enabled him to leave behind him a great mass of valuable work, of which his symphonies and instrumental pieces count by hundreds; and in addition to his oratorios, he left nineteen masses, with a "Stabat Mater," and eight German and fifteen Italian operas. To purely vocal music he also contributed freely.

Haydn, among musicians, was pre-eminently self-taught, and to him is due the honour of having raised instrumental

* Moscheles quotes an anecdote in proof of Haydn's unsophisticated love of fair play. Haydn heard that Beethoven had spoken in tones of depreciation of his oratorio, the *Creation*. "That is wrong of him," said Haydn. "What has he written, then? His Septet? Certainly that is beautiful; nay, splendid!" he added, in tones of earnest admiration, completely forgetting the bitterness of the censure directed against himself.

music from a dawning, chaotic state to something approaching perfection. No doubt old Bach anticipated him in design, and was "great as the greatest." It has also been alleged that numerous minor and nameless performers made advances both in theory and practice, and paved the way for Haydn. It may be so, but unquestionably Haydn popularised the constructive power of Bach, and supplied unity and full expression to the halting performances of the minor composers.

Mr. Haweis draws the following parallel between Haydn and Gluck:—"Gluck and Haydn worked parallel to each other. We are not aware that they ever met. Both carried out great reforms—Gluck in the sphere of opera, Haydn in the sphere of symphonic and instrumental music. Both were adored in foreign countries: whilst Gluck was known in England and worshipped in France, Haydn was known in France and worshipped in England. Both, however, were recognised and admired in Germany; both were generous in their recognition of others; both were the friends of Mozart; both knew how to be popular with princes, without forfeiting the respect of equals; both could compose for the people, without pandering to what was vicious or ignorant in their tastes."

Haydn's oratorio of *The Creation* is quoted as a proof of the singular absence of the poetic faculty in his genius, since no man with a spark of poetry in his nature could have adopted the libretto of *The Creation* as it was prepared by Von Schwieten; yet Haydn had in a marked degree the quality of humour which is generally found in union with the complementary quality, pathos, while the two qualities combined are, at least, prominent elements in that poetry which is most human and complete. Instances

of Haydn's humour, which after all approaches farce, are to be found in his "Farewell Symphony," "in which each player has successively to leave the orchestra, until one remains alone, and his 'Toy Symphony,' in which all the instruments of the nursery are brought into requirement;"* while Mr. Haweis jestingly surmises that the sudden thunder of Haydn's "Surprise Symphony" might be intended to startle his drowsy admirers of the London season beginning to nod over some of the composer's more lulling effects.†

One lovely air of Haydn's has long kept its place among drawing-room music, and its sweet warbles and delightful trills were heard over the length and breadth of the land, by high and low, when it was first wedded to the words written by the accomplished wife of John Hunter, the great anatomist, and the aunt by marriage to Joanna Baillie. "My Mother bids me bind my hair," penetrated the homes of the middle classes, as well as the mansions of the nobility, and was sung by cradles and over household work, as well as to piano and harp accompaniments, even in a land much less musical than Germany.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

† A concert given at the Crystal Palace this season (1874) was intended to convey a notion of the humorous, the eccentric, and the extravagant in music, as exemplified in some of the works of eminent composers. The instrumental pieces included, among others, the "Farewell Symphony" of Haydn, Mozart's "Musical Joke," and Mendelssohn's "Clown's Funeral March." The *Athenæum*, in noticing the concert, suggested that to the specimens given might be added the "Toy Symphony" of Haydn, the "Funeral March of a Marionette," by Gounod, and "some scherzos from Schubert and Schumann, which, for extravagant fun, would be welcomed in any English pantomime."

CHAPTER III.

MOZART, 1756—1791.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART was born at Salzburg in 1756. He was the son of a learned and upright musician ("there is Leopold Mozart, the father, with his old threadbare coat and oaken stick, a God-fearing, sensible, but somewhat narrow-minded man," Mr. Haweis describes him), who was in the service of the Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg, and who in his early married days was reckoned to form, with his young wife, the handsomest couple in Salzburg. Of their seven children only two grew up—the great composer, who was the younger, and his sister, Anna Maria, familiarly called "Nannerl."

The elder Mozart early directed the musical education of his daughter, whose talents were of a superior order; and in the course of teaching the little girl of seven years, the father discovered to his delight that her musical organization, fine though it might be, was far eclipsed by that of her brother of two years, listening with evident perception and joy to his sister's playing on the harpsichord, and even finding out "the consonances on that instrument." A year later, when the baby Mozart was three years, his proud and fond father began the course of

systematic instruction, which was to add the earliest and highest cultivation to the son's great power. Mozart's daily lessons are said to have lasted, even at that infantile period, from half an hour to an hour.*

Little wonder that in 1760, when he was but in his fifth year, he composed little melodies which his father wrote down for him.†

In 1762, when the boy was six years of age, Leopold Mozart, the father, then in his forty-fourth year, notably solemn and earnest as became a Kapell-Meister, started on his first musical progress, with his little son, and his daughter of eleven years, in order to display and reap a small harvest from their precocious abilities. In this tour the children were carried to Munich, where they played before the Elector and his court, and to Vienna, where the juvenile performers were equally patronised and petted by the Empress Maria Theresa and her own clever little flock of archdukes and archduchesses.

The evil effects of such premature display were so far counteracted to the children by their father's grave, steady character, his devotion to what he regarded as their interests, his inflexible strictness in prosecuting their education, whether at home or abroad, while every other study was entirely subsidiary to that of music. The children seem to have highly enjoyed these tours, with the sense of importance which they brought, their fêting and gifts—most of which, in the shape of jewellery, were kept

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

† "He only required half-an-hour to learn a minuet, and one hour for a longer movement. . . . . The Grand Duchess Helene Poulowna, a few weeks ago, made a present to the Mozarteum of the music-book from which Mozart learned music, and in which he wrote down his first compositions."—*Lady Wallace.*

in a box for them by their father, and only dealt out to them at his pleasure, even after the recipients were youth and maiden. Perhaps it was a beneficial check to these premature triumphs when Nannerl caught scarlet fever, and conveyed it to the precocious prodigy, her brother, and their father had to wait for the recovery of the two poor little children, sick and away from their home and mother, before he could take them on their farther course to Presburg, and back by Vienna again to Salzburg. The following year Leopold Mozart sought renewed leave of absence, and made a farther flight with his gifted children as far as Paris. At Versailles the trio were warmly welcomed by their countrywoman, the enthusiastic young queen; and there Mozart's first publication, "two sets of two sonatas," the work of a boy of seven years, was brought out, and dedicated to Marie Antoinette. From Paris the party came to England, where they found the English Bach, Christian, firmly established in Queen Charlotte's favour, and ready to present them at court. During an illness of his father's, the child Wolfgang "composed his first symphony, of which his sister copied the orchestral parts as he finished the score, sheet by sheet; and this was played at his public concerts."* The writer, from whom I quote, states that a member of the Royal Society took the trouble of visiting the child, in order to put his alleged qualifications and attainments to the test, and that this gentleman recorded in the papers of the Society his satisfaction with the remarkable musical feats achieved by the boy.

Mr. Haweis says, "At the age of four he wrote tunes; at twelve he could not find his equal on the harpsichord,

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

and the professors of Europe stood aghast at one who improvised fugues on a given theme, and then took a ride-a-cock horse on his father's stick." There has been preserved the announcement of a concert given by the Mozarts, in May, 1765, at Hickford's Rooms, Brewer Street, Golden Square. It is in the following terms:— "For the benefit of Miss Mozart, of thirteen, and Master Mozart, of eight years of age, prodigies of nature, a concert of music, with all the overtures of this little boy's own composition." We are familiar enough in our own day with so-called "infant phenomenons," and the kindly satire which they have provoked, but here was a pair of most genuine "phenomenons;" yet the wisdom of exhibiting them and making capital of them was not less doubtful than in the case of their more questionable brothers and sisters.

On their return by Holland, the children suffered together another severe illness, but were able to revisit Paris and the chief towns of Southern France and Switzerland before they arrived at Salzburg, crowned with laurels which had indeed been plucked betimes.

It is said that the prince-archbishop—with whom and with his successor the future relations of the Mozart family were destined to be far from cordial, though the elder Mozart managed, at the sacrifice of much, both of fatherly and personal pride, to continue in his sovereign's service—distrusted the stories which he heard of the boy's genius and career; and to expose a deception, if such there were, caused the boy composer to have an oratorio given him to write, and ordained that during the writing little Mozart should be locked up for a week in a chamber of the palace, and allowed no communication save with the

servant who brought his food. It is said also that Mozart came through this hard trial, for his years, quite satisfactorily, and that his oratorio was afterwards performed among the church music of the cathedral.

The next year was devoted to the study of Italian and German composers, and included the mastery of the Latin language, as it was employed in church services. The sole exception to the studies was a visit made by the family to Vienna. In the course of those various visits to Vienna, many such appearances as the one I am about to give my readers a glimpse of, from the pages of a book already referred to, were made by the boy Mozart. "One day a call came to him when hearing a little boy play the harpsichord at Charles's house. His cousin had been greatly excited beforehand, for the tiny virtuoso had had a success at court, but Josquin had not shared his expectation. But as the child played some compositions of his own, he was reminded of his own childhood of promise in Paris, and found himself listening with filling eyes. The little player, he felt prophetically assured, had a great future before him, and rejoiced to think that he, too, had known as a child something of that intuition which now radiated from the blue eyes of the little Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart."—(*Alcestis.*)

On young Mozart's return to Salzburg he received from his somewhat churlish prince-archbishop the appointment of *Concert-Meister*. No doubt the honour was great and even unexampled for a boy of twelve years; but as for the slender emoluments they were not suffered to follow the appointment for four years, though the father Mozart had, like most German musicians of his class, a very modest income.

In the year 1769, when Wolfgang Mozart was thirteen years of age, his father set out with the lad that he might finish his musical education according to due precedent in Italy. Here begin those lively ingenuous letters of Mozart, which have been lovingly preserved, collected, and incorporated in his biography, edited, re-edited, and finally translated by Lady Wallace. To the English version of these letters is prefixed an engraving, from a picture made of the boy, which proves that to his other attractions was added the hereditary possession of a lovely face and charming person altogether. There he leans forward with his roll of music, like an insignia, grasped in one hand, and his face turned round to the gazer—a fair, full, open face, with cleft chin, sensitive mouth, well-formed nose, those large blue eyes, less dreamy than in after-years, and having finely arched brows, a broad prominent forehead, from which the silky hair, not yet spoilt by powder, is swept back to fall into waves of curls over each ear, and to be gathered in one long love-lock, tied with a riband in the fashion of the time, hanging down the back of his little coat.

Wolfgang and his father sojourned in turn at Milan, Bologna, and Verona, the lad being successful in gaining in each of these cities, after a severe examination, the election of membership to their Philharmonic Societies, and during his stay at Bologna securing the regard of Padre Mantini, the great contrapundist. The father and son reached Rome in time for the Passion-week, eagerly looked forward to, both by man and boy, alike in the devout practice of their religion and in their zeal for art. We are told that it was in attending the celebration of the numerous rites and ceremonies of the Passion-week,

in the Papal chapel, that young Mozart "performed the famous feat of transcribing from memory Allegri's *Miserere*," the use of which had been previously restricted to the Pope's chapel, the singers being forbidden, under pain of excommunication, to carry copies of their several parts out of the sacred building.*

From Rome Mozart proceeded, with undiminished glory, to Naples, back to Rome, where he had the title of *Cavaliere*, with the order of the Golden Spur, which had been given to Gluck, bestowed on him by the Pope; but, however much the boyish heart might be elated by the rank and title, it submitted to and sympathized with the fatherly discretion, which caused the distinction to be left behind on that side of Italy. Once more at Milan, Mozart made the real commencement of his musical career by composing the opera of *Mitridate, Re di Ponto*, which had the singular success of being represented twenty nights in succession. From Venice the travellers journeyed home to Salzburg, to receive an ovation from the sympathetic women of their household, to whom they had communicated every step of their progress, and every honour with which it had been crowned, and who were waiting eagerly to hail them. But the travellers set out again almost immediately, since Mozart was summoned especially to return to Milan and compose a serenata for the marriage of the Archduke Ferdinand, which left him little enough time to hasten back to Salzburg and write another serenata for the installation of the new archbishop. Finally, this busy time was crowned by another flying visit to Milan, and by the composition of an additional oratorio and opera. When all was done, Mozart was but sixteen years of age; and

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

the great charm of his early letters from Italy are their perfect boyishness, in the middle of the world of operas and oratorios, concerts and church masses, peopled with singers of all kinds and degrees, directors and choristers, in which the lad is so engrossed, that he has hardly time to observe anything out of that world—to what purpose, after all, in his letters, when it is also the world of his sympathizing mother, and especially of his old companion and firm friend, his sister Nannerl, to whom his bright eager letters are chiefly addressed? It would be hard to say what education the lad could pursue in this musical turmoil, beyond the jabber of continental tongues, which he seemed to pick up with the greatest facility, and which he spoke and wrote to the end of his days very incorrectly, and beyond that invaluable discipline of utmost filial obedience and punctual observance of his religious duties, together with diligent prosecution of his single worldly aim of music, which in the middle of every distraction his father rigidly exacted from him.

It is a comfort to find the boy thus pressed forward in his career, still joyous and boy-like, though he could sign himself "Chevalier Mozart," announcing that his sole recreations consisted of "dancing English hornpipes and cutting capers," that he had been eating quantities of "fine pears and peaches and melons," that he was sending "a million kisses to his mamma," and a thousand kisses to "Miss Bimbrel" (the family dog), and making inquiry, "Tell me how Master Canary is. Do you know why I am thinking about the canary? Because we have one in our room that chirps out G sharp, just like ours," and signing himself "Catch him who can!" But amidst the merry, affectionate chatter transferred to paper, with

its incessant engrossing main topic, which strikes us as so odd in a boy, of operatic details, with their *impressarios* and *prime donne*, there recur significant pathetic allusions to constantly aching fingers, and to frequent fits of ill-timed sleepiness, while he begs his mother and sister that they would pray for him that his opera might go off well.

Mozart's opera of *Lucio Silla*, written at Milan, in 1772, before he was sixteen years of age, was eminently successful, filling the opera-house, and causing its young composer, and even his grave father, to write in wild spirits of the work's completion and the realisation of their utmost hopes. As the dark side to all this premature success, Wolfgang Mozart received little or no encouragement from his own sovereign archbishop; not only so, but Mozart's father's position in the office which he held, but so often vacated in order to promote his son's fortunes, was rendered precarious and uncomfortable on account of the offence given by the elder Mozart's numerous absences, and by his natural irritation at the slighting manner in which the genius of his son, so warmly hailed elsewhere, was treated by the authorities of his native town. Accordingly father and son were eager in seeking, from the first, to procure an engagement for the lad away from Salzburg. For this purpose the two were at Vienna petitioning the musical magnates of the imperial court in the summer of 1773. Though the father and son failed in the effort then, and had to go back as they had come to Salzburg, Wolfgang received soon after a commission from the Elector of Bavaria to write an opera buffa for the carnival of 1775 at Munich. This opera, Nannerl Mozart, then a pretty, very musical young woman, who had been Wolfgang's associate in their early exhibitions, and who felt so

lively a sympathy with the object of his life, had the great pleasure, in one of their last visits together, of witnessing. She travelled to Munich for that purpose, was lodged by her careful father in the house of a widow in the large market-place, and shared in her younger brother's triumph, when, in the crammed theatre, every aria was met by "a tremendous uproar and clapping of hands, and cries of 'Viva maestro!'" and when even their Serene Highnesses the Electress and the Electress-dowager condescended to call out "Bravo!" so that Nannerl may have been supposed in fit spirits to enjoy what followed of her part in the masks of the carnival. Poor Nannerl! we are glad that she had this experience; for her career which began alongside that of her brother, not only came to the usual woman-like abrupt public conclusion, when her star was superseded and swallowed up in the sun of his genius, but hers was not a bright story, as the two courses diverged more and more widely from the Munich days, when she was glad enough to be capable of joining in the laughter which her brother—with his dangerous share of the sharp-tongued wit of the Mozart family—did not hesitate to provoke at the stupidity of Nannerl's first lover, Herr von Mölk. However, that early home of Mozart's was as wholesome and cheery as sterling principles, warm affections, the first dazzling rays of genius, and the gay gibes of light hearts could make it.

In 1777, when Mozart was twenty-one years of age, it had been proved, beyond doubt, that he would receive no aid beyond a nominal appointment, at a nominal salary, from his prince-archbishop at Salzburg. It had become equally evident that the elder Mozart could no longer accompany his son in search of employment, as formerly

in search of instruction, without utter destruction to the elder man's prospects as Hof Componist and Hof Kapell-Meister, and teacher of music, on the modest receipts from which offices the family, in fact, subsisted. It was therefore arranged that the son should take his final flight from the paternal home, but not altogether unattended. The good housemother proposed to leave for a time her cherished home, to follow the fortunes of her still more cherished son, till his anxious parents should have reason to regard him as fit to stand quite alone, and have the sole responsibility of filling and emptying a purse—a responsibility of which, by-the-bye, Mozart never showed himself very capable. In the meantime Nannerl, who could not be supposed to have her mother's experience to be at her brother's service, did not fail, as a well-brought-up Fräulein, to be sufficiently instructed in the mysteries of German *wirthschaft* to prove her mother's substitute in the management of the simple frugal household, while at the same time Nannerl was amply qualified to aid and relieve her father in his duties as head music-teacher in Salzburg and its neighbourhood.

Even with the mother's protection, which seems, after all, to have been no more than the kindly, innocent companionship of a simple, quiet, thrifty woman, who was totally unversed in travelling, the father continued to experience great concern for the welfare of the son; and the earlier of the ample letters which Wolfgang wrote to apprise the little party at home of the progress of the travellers, and to cheer the "très-cher Père" and Nannerl in the dulness of their enforced stillness, and of the empty house, are full of how well the lad and his mother were getting on. "I am quite a second papa, and look after

everything," declares the writer. "I settled from the first to pay the postilions, for I can talk to such fellows better than mamma." The letters go on insisting what capable, excellent travellers they are proving,—what good hopes they have of establishing in time a great success.

Munich, which was well known to young Mozart at least, and Augsburg were among his first halting-places. At the last town, among the advantages of influential, not to say noble patrons, he had many friends and some kindred, a brother of his father's being established as a bookbinder in Augsburg. The latter, with his family, might be supposed to be of especial benefit to Frau Mozart in her strange surroundings. Mozart's letters, with many aspirations and hopeful anticipations of the least indications of Court favour, soon contain accounts of concerts which he was enabled to give, and of different pupils, the receipts and payments of which were to form the sinews of war in his case; with much gossip, which ceased to be gossip in the consideration of the momentous interests to the correspondents that rested on the gifts and graces of these sopranos, tenors, and basses. Naturally, the theatre is to both mother and son the great field of interest at Augsburg, and so, after both are conscientiously punctual in their religious observances, the Frau goes early and gets a good place for the afternoon performance, of which she trusts one day to see her son—as he has been already in his juvenile days—the creator and guiding spirit, on which every eye and lip and musical instrument will hang, while Wolfgang is here and there and everywhere, in the orchestra, in the side scenes, in the box of an influential amateur composer.

The young man is not without the relaxation acceptable to his social, genial temperament, though, indeed, he is from childhood to prime of manhood assiduously, nay, feverishly industrious, as well as domestic with the domesticity of a devout spirit, a tender heart, and a sweet if vehement temper. Among Mozart's favoured companions is a young, pretty, gay, and clever girl cousin, two years his junior, of whose sharp tongue—that dangerous inheritance of the Mozarts—however, even he seems to stand a little in awe, but with whose owner he swears fast friendship, which does not seem to have been compromised or threatened by any admixture of love-making, for after the friendship had suffered one or two little shakes and shocks, he treats the cousin as his sure ally and confidant. There was no want of fidelity in Mozart's nature; on the contrary, he appears to have been endowed with that indulgent clinging to old use and wont which is often not without a certain element of weakness in its generous forbearance. To the cousin Mozart begged his father to send in the young man and his mother's name, on their leaving Augsburg, a souvenir in the shape of one of the necklaces and boxes or étuis—the early tributes to the wonderful genius of his children of which Leopold Mozart retained the custody. To the same cousin Mozart wrote from Mannheim a letter in what Lady Wallace herself calls "the silly doggrel" of which he was boyishly fond. Here is a sample of the production—

"My dear Coz, Buzz,

"I have safely received your precious epistle—thistle; and from it I perceive—achieve, that my aunt—gaunt, and you—shoe, are quite well—bell," &c., &c.

At Mannheim Mozart spent the winter, though he was disappointed in his efforts to be made music-teacher to the children of the Elector. He was busy notwithstanding, and thus gives an account of one of his days, in a letter in which he has expressed with almost womanly fondness, as well as manly earnestness, his wishes for "a very happy new year" to his father, and has promised "to strive, and honestly strive, to deserve still more the love of such an admirable father." "I am writing this at eleven at night, because I have no other leisure time. We cannot very well rise before eight o'clock, for in our rooms (on the ground-floor) it is not light till half-past eight. I then dress quickly; at ten o'clock I sit down to compose till twelve or half-past twelve, when I go to Wendling's, where I generally write till half-past one; we then dine. At three o'clock I go to the Mainzer Hof (a hotel), to a Dutch officer, to give him lessons in *galanterie*-playing and thorough bass, for which, if I mistake not, he gives me four ducats for twelve lessons. At four o'clock I go home to teach the daughters of the house. We never begin till half-past four, as we wait for lights. At six o'clock I go to Cannabich's, to instruct Madlle. Rosa." (This pupil of Mozart's, then a girl of fifteen, whose bad tricks of fingering he takes note elsewhere of correcting, lived to become one of the famous amateur musicians of Germany.) "I stay to supper there, when we converse and sometimes play; I then invariably take a book out of my pocket and read, as I used to do at Salzburg."

Wieland, the poet, was among Mozart's early friends at Mannheim. During this winter also began Mozart's connection with the Weber family, which, in a nature so constant and forgiving as his, was pregnant with

results. Whether or not "M. Weber," the prompter and theatrical copyist, who had to rear a family of six children, five of them girls, on an income of two hundred or, at most, four hundred florins a year, and who was, as it happened, the uncle of Carl Maria von Weber, were the "downright honest German" that Mozart on first acquaintance believed him to be, it is certain that the women of the family, consciously or unconsciously, contrived to weave an inextricable web of influence round Mozart, which no knowledge on his part of conspicuous instances in which they had failed him, and no warning on the part of his family, served to neutralise. Mozart's first attraction to the Webers was undoubtedly the beauty and musical capabilities of one of the daughters, Aloysia Weber, a girl of fifteen, who was then training for a prima donna. Into her interests the young composer of twenty threw himself heart and soul, in spite of the indignant remonstrances of his father on the imprudence of his son's staking a reputation which was yet to be made on the doubtful career of so youthful and unknown a singer.

Mozart went excursions with the Webers, played at small courts where mademoiselle sang, persisted in regarding the family as so many examples of injured merit, advised them to go to Italy, almost agreeing to accompany them; was ready to answer with his life for Mademoiselle Aloysia's singing; and what was perhaps a more signal proof to his alarmed and exasperated family of his subjugation, was ready "to write an opera for Verona for thirty zecchini, solely that Mademoiselle Weber may acquire fame by it," and this after he had offered that the whole party should take Salzburg on their way, and that he should bring the future prima donna. along with her father and

two more of his daughters, to make the acquaintance of Mozart's dear papa and dear sister, by remaining a fortnight with them in the old Kapell-Meister's frugal home. It was in vain that Mozart told his father that Mademoiselle Weber could play the young man's sonatas at first sight, and how splendidly she sang his arias, ending by assuring his father that she had the same reputation at Mannheim that Nannerl Mozart enjoyed at Salzburg—that the Père Weber resembled the Père Mozart—that, indeed, the whole Weber family resembled the Mozart family; and then the special pleader proceeded to prove with the greatest ingenuousness that the gift of cooking possessed by Josepha Weber would be a perfect godsend to the travelling party. Every argument only confirmed the tokens of the young composer's infatuation. At least, the Salzburg Mozarts could not have been surprised when they heard that Wolfgang Mozart, with his mother proving altogether ineffectual to stay the tide of his passion, had established a right to his interest in Aloysia Weber by plighting his troth to her; but the stern, dogmatic old Kapell-Meister was still powerful to keep his son, until then so dutiful, from taking the rash and compromising journey to Italy with the Webers, for which, very likely, the family funds were quite unequal. Mozart still held by the Webers, wrote exercises and arias—one very beautiful to suit his mistress's voice, would not give up his faith in her supreme excellence as a singer; but he relinquished the extravagant idea of going with her and her father to Italy, in order to instal her against all opposition as the prima donna of the year, and took all his father's urgent remonstrances in good part, writing, "'Next to God comes papa' was my axiom when a child,

and I still think the same," and bidding his sister not vex herself for every trifle. In the course of a little time he fulfilled his father's intentions for him by tearing himself away from the Webers, and following, with his mother, the friends whom young Mozart ought to have accompanied to Paris, for the purpose of pursuing to the utmost his thorough art-education; and this, though his first letter from Paris shows him still so full of Mannheim and the Webers, that he can write of little save of his farewells, of Mademoiselle Weber's affecting singing at the last concert, where, with hardly an exception, his music was played; of the superior gratitude of the Webers over that of any other resident in the town, on whom he had conferred favours; how Mademoiselle Weber had paid him the compliment of kindly knitting two pairs of mits for him; how M. Weber wrote out whatever he, Mozart, required, gratis, gave him the music-paper, and, in addition, as a token of regard, Molière's comedies; how they thanked him, and all wept at parting from him, Weber coming down-stairs with him, and remaining standing at the door till he turned the corner. All this is written in the most evident good faith, and as a kind of plaintive protest against his father's severe judgment.

At Paris Mozart worked hard, both in composing and teaching; but this period of his life was not happy, for he did not take to the place or to the people. He disliked their manner of life; he was averse to their music, even with the recitative which had possessed so great an attraction for Gluck. To crown the grievous incidents of this time, Mozart was left alone in Paris, after the great misfortune of losing the loving mother who had followed him so far, who had been ailing for some time, but had been

patiently quiet under her ailments, and had gone, at Paris, into a cold, dark lodging with him, for economy's sake. Her value, overlooked and forgotten in recent episodes, had never been so deeply felt as when, far away from her home, her faithful husband, and her daughter, she was taken from her son by a sudden stroke. In those frank, child-like, yet manly letters, which give so vivid a picture of Mozart's life—letters which were written to the familiar and comparatively humble members of Mozart's family, but are now treasured in national museums and in the collections of German virtuosi—he gives an account of his loss. He writes first to a friend to support his father and sister under the blow, which the son and brother would fain break to them, by forwarding to them, as if the mother were still alive, the details of the sad fourteen days during which her son had watched and feared, with little hope, by the sufferer's bedside, in the strange city, and the stages of her illness, from headache and loss of hearing to burning fever and delirium. He then describes the difficulties he had had in procuring ice, and getting a German doctor for her, and the shock he had sustained when the doctor, after one or two visits, had told him that she might not live over another night, and had said she had better have the sacrament, with Mozart's hurried search for a German priest, and the sick woman's death three days after she had received the last offices of her Church. In his distress Mozart was still full of care for his absent friends, and full of resignation to the will of God, and of faith in the consolations of religion.

At this time Mozart was still in correspondence with the Webers, and in anticipation of even a speedy marriage with Aloysia. On his leaving Paris, in the autumn of

1778, and hurrying to what he called his "beloved Mannheim," and going to stay with the Webers, who had parted with their best friend the previous year with such effusion, he found them in comparatively flourishing circumstances, Aloysia having just concluded an engagement, in connection with the Munich theatre, at a salary of a thousand florins a year, and her father having his income raised to a clear six hundred florins a year. The lover rejoiced sincerely; but his joy was so far damped by the absence of Aloysia at Munich, to which he followed her, and there the meeting revealed to his amazed, incredulous, pained, and indignant heart quite a new order of things, such as had never entered into his honest and loyal mind. The Webers' prosperity had turned their heads, at least so far as Aloysia was concerned. Mozart had not made so great a stir in the musical world of Paris as had been expected; he had still no better engagement than his old, little more than nominal, place at Salzburg, under his exacting father and his cool prince-archbishop, and the fickle, worldly young girl, had already other views for herself.

When Mozart, in mourning for his mother, and wearing, according to the French fashion of mourning, a red coat with black buttons,*—doubtless becoming enough to his handsome person—entered the room in Munich where Aloysia Weber sat, the girl, without a feeling of sympathy for the suffering through which her lover had passed, or for the pang which she was about to inflict upon him, seemed scarcely to recognise the young man who, before they had parted a little year ago, had not only wooed her with her own consent, but had been willing to sacrifice his own

* Lady Wallace.

prospects for her professional success. Mozart's spirit rose, though he was cut to the heart, and he "quickly seated himself at the piano, and sang, *Ich lasse das Mädchen das nicht will* ('I leave the maiden who will have nothing to say to me')." It seemed then as if Mozart, at that moment and for ever, shook himself free from the power of the Webers.

Mozart was so far consoled by a warm welcome from his father and sister at Salzburg, and by the family circle, with its unnamed vacant place, being enlivened by the company of the dear friendly *bäsle*, or cousin, to whom Mozart turned always, next to his nearest relations, for cordial regard, whose own fault it might be that such regard did not ripen in so affectionate and true a man to a more tender feeling. Mozart continued at Salzburg for a year and a half, till 1780, when he was twenty-four years of age. He lamented the interval of inactivity, and yet its fruits were, besides masses and vespers, *König Thamos* and *Zaide*. He was summoned, to his great satisfaction, to Munich, in 1781, to write for the carnival the opera of *Idomeneo, König von Creta*. He went to Munich to do the work, that he might be on the spot for practising and rehearsals, and that he might study the capabilities of the singers, for it was Mozart's declared opinion that an aria should be made for and fit the singer as his coat fitted him. Thus it comes that the great singers, with regard to whom the great composers so often wrote their scores, have become identified with the music which they sung, as no player, not even Garrick or Siddons, has become necessarily identified with the great plays, which were written for the most part without reference to the players, and it might be centuries before their existence. And

thus it has become so difficult to dissever oratorio, opera, and singer, that hardly any histories of composers have been attempted which do not include histories of singers and executants. It does not come within the scope of this book, however, to do more than allude incidentally to the great singers on the compass and tone of whose voices the great composers framed their airs. I merely wish to draw attention to the fact that such an influence—that of the singers on the composers—has been in force notably from Mozart downwards.

At Munich, Mozart was well received, and in *Idomeneo* he achieved a great advance on his previous efforts. The death of the old Empress Maria Theresa was not allowed to interfere with the carnival business of the theatre. Busy and content, Mozart could look forward to his father and his sister ultimately quitting Salzburg, where so much official bitterness was the elder man's portion, and taking up their quarters as a united family (long a loving dream of Mozart's) in Munich. With regard to a temporary visit, Mozart could sanguinely plan to his father for the three being together in the young man's lodgings. "I have a roomy alcove in my first room, in which two beds stand. These would do capitally for you and me. As for my sister, all we can do is to put a stove into the next room, which will only be an affair of four or five florins," &c. And the Kapell-Meister and Nannerl did come together to Munich, in time for the first performance of the opera and for the gaieties of the carnival.

Shortly afterwards the archbishop, in whose service young Mozart, as well as his father, remained against his will, went to Vienna, and, desiring the attendance of so distinguished a native musician, little as the prince had

heretofore shown his appreciation of Wolfgang Mozart, the great man commanded the presence of the composer, and thus for the first time since early youth Mozart made his appearance in the imperial city, the great musical capital which was to be thenceforth his home.

Mozart was charmed with his introduction to life in Vienna ("a splendid place, and for my profession the best in the world"), always excepting the treatment of the archbishop, who, knowing the young musician to be a man of slender means, persisted in keeping his appointment an honorary one, while at the same time it prevented Mozart from receiving a more lucrative engagement. One of Mozart's first friends was the Countess Thun (who had played the same friendly part to Haydn), and of whom Mozart wrote, "I do think she is the most charming and lovely person I ever saw in my life."

While Mozart was in the full tide of renewing old and making new musical acquaintances, as he assisted at public and cabinet concerts—the latter, however, being, like his situation, more complimentary than remunerative—before he had received any great encouragement to settle in Vienna, from which, in the absence of decided success, his father desired to withdraw him, the young composer, unable to sustain any longer the archbishop's hard terms, after some very rough passages between them, by mutual consent quitted and was dismissed from the prince's service. This event put an end to all idea of Mozart's return to Salzburg, and he was soon ready to announce, with fresh confidence, that his good fortune was just about to begin: as a pledge of it, and of his circumstances being comparatively easy, he sent his father money. In the meantime he had again come across the Weber

family, of whom the father was dead; and Aloysia, who had married an actor, Lange, was holding an engagement at the Court Theatre, Vienna. Magnanimous and friendly almost to a fault, Mozart did not seem to have shrunk from the renewal of the old intimacy; and when he was deprived of lodgings at the archbishop's cost, he readily acknowledged to his father the kindness of "old Madame Weber," who had taken him into her house and given him "a pretty room" with "obliging people."

Mozart found considerable difficulty in reconciling his father—long accustomed, though he might kick against it at times, to rely on princely patronage—to the circumstances, and naturally the Salzburg Mozarts dreaded the consequences of Wolfgang Mozart's new entanglement with the Webers. The plain traces of this justifiable jealousy of the father and sister, are in Mozart's reply to his father's angry letter, in which the young man roundly asserts, "What you write of the Webers I do assure you is not the fact. I was a fool about Madame Lange, I own; but what is a man not when he is in love? . . . . Believe me when I say that old Madame Weber is a very obliging person, and I cannot serve her in return in proportion to her kindness to me, for indeed I have not time to do so." Within the same month, when Mozart is too much engaged with his pupils with a dinner at Countess Thun's and a concert in the imperial pleasure-grounds, to finish a letter home, he commissions Constanze, or Stanzerl, Weber, one of the young unmarried sisters of the old love Aloysia, to add a postscript to his letter, showing the familiar terms he was on with the family. (In one of Mozart's last letters he refers to meeting, after her second marriage, a girl with whom he and the younger Webers

had played hide and seek in the old house in the quarter which bore the curious name of the *Auge Gottes.*)

Mozart's letters at this time are full of his hopeful plans and prospects; they are also full of sedulous attempts to reconcile and propitiate his father and sister with regard to the steps which Mozart had taken. He sends his father contributions to his purse, of which "thirty ducats" formed a small instance; yet habitual contributions of even thirty ducats must have been a serious deduction from a purse so incapable of filling and so prone to empty itself as Mozart's purse, without any very extravagant and certainly without prodigal habits on his part, always showed itself. He remembers to forward to his sister the lawn she required, "already paid for" by him; he sends her a portrait and ribbons, which he trusts "will suit her taste," as they are "in the very last fashion." In addition, Mr. Haweis refers to two of Mozart's letters at this time, as affording "the strongest circumstantial evidence to the purity of his private life and the constancy of his attention to his religious duties."

But very soon the Mozarts, at Salzburg, were disturbed by reports of a probable marriage between Wolfgang Mozart and Constanze Weber. At first Mozart treated the report with ridicule, alleged that there was no foundation for it, save the fact of his living in the same house with the young girl, with whom he jested on rare occasions of an evening, and described Madame Weber as so much vexed by the idle report, on account of the annoyance which it might give to him, that she objected to his going out anywhere with Stanzerl or her sister, and even advised him to "remove to another house in order to avoid further unpleasantness." In the same breath, Mozart indulges in a somewhat suspicious—under the cir-

cumstances—philippic against a marriage with a rich wife as a resource for him, while he professes that matrimony in itself, against which he had no objections, would yet be a misfortune for him at that time. Mozart did remove to another household, whether under the representation of Madame Weber or as a tribute to appearances; either way it was a case of locking the stable after the steed was stolen.*

In the autumn of this year, Mozart, while publishing his sonatas by subscription, was engaged in writing an opera, of which he had high expectations, had as much teaching as he cared for, and many engagements to play at concerts. In these circumstances he wrote to his sister, then in delicate health, a brotherly letter, sympathizing sincerely with her on the want of sufficient means and employment on the part of her betrothed husband D'Yppold, suggesting that he might come to Vienna and try what he could find to do there. Mozart would try everything in his power to assist D'Yppold, and if they succeeded Nannerl might marry her lover at once, looking forward, as she would look, to supplement his income by playing at private concerts and teaching, for which she would be far better paid than at Salzburg. In that case "the dear father" would come to Vienna also, and pass the rest of his days in rest and peace, maintained by the united exertions of his children. It was the old cherished wish of the family's being all together again, under the sheltering wing of the son and genius, however heavy the burden to himself; but it was destined to be frustrated.

* Of one of his lodgings in Vienna Mozart writes, "I have only one small room, and it is quite crammed with a piano, a table, a bed, and a chest of drawers."

The old, witty, merry *bäsle* seemed to be as uncomfortable in her lovers as Nannerl had been, from casual allusions in other letters, and Mozart appears to have been concerned in her interests also.

In one of these early Viennese letters Mozart sends, whether in jest or earnest, a curious prescription for the ailments of his hypochondriac father. "Take some cart-grease, wrap it in paper, and wear it on your chest. Bruise the bone of a leg of veal, and add a kreuzer's worth of leopard's bane in paper, and carry it in your pocket. I hope this will certainly cure you."

As an example of the Viennese manners of the period, I may quote from Mozart's description of a masked ball, given in honour of the visit of some princely German to the Austrian capital. "There was a horrible confusion at the Schönbrunn ball. . . . . Everybody went . . . . the ball was full of hairdressers and housemaids. Now, however, came the finest thing of all, at which the nobility was very indignant. The Emperor, the whole of the time, had the Grand-Duchess on his arm. There were two sets of *contredanses* of the nobility—Romans and Tartars. Into one of these the Vienna population, who are never over-civil, pushed forward so rudely that they forced the Grand-Duchess to let go the Emperor's arm, shoving her forward among the dancers. The Emperor began to stamp furiously, swore like a lazzarone, drove back a crowd of people, and struck out right and left. Some of the Hungarian guards wished to go with him to clear a space, but he sent them off. He is very properly served, for it could not be otherwise: a mob will always be a mob."

Before 1781—the year of Mozart's going to Vienna—was closed, he wrote to confess to his father his coming

in greater peace, Mozart had sufficient influence with one of his friendly and, in this instance, flighty patronesses, the Baroness Waldstädten, to induce her to have Constanze Weber frequently staying with her on visits.* The whole story reads like a chapter or two of a novel by Thackeray.

Mozart was so far diverted from his more private and personal troubles by the appearance, at Vienna, of the great Italian pianist, Clementi, in competition with whom Mozart played before the Emperor.

Mozart left nothing undone, in the prospect of his marriage, to appease the bitter disappointment of the father, who had sacrificed much for his son, and who was perhaps not unnaturally inclined to be a little unreasonable in the return which he sought for his pains. Mozart would fain have brought round his sister to his side. In one of his letters to her, he gives a sample of his Viennese day, with its many demands on his time and thought:—"At six o'clock in the morning I have my hair dressed, and have finished my toilet by seven o'clock. I write till nine. From nine to one I give lessons. I then dine, unless I am invited out, when dinner is usually at two o'clock, sometimes at three, as it was to-day, and will be to-morrow, at Countess Zichi's and Countess Thun's. I cannot begin to work before five or six o'clock in the evening, and I am often prevented doing so by some concert; otherwise I write till nine o'clock. I then go to my dear Constanze, though our pleasure in meeting is frequently embittered by the unkind speeches of her mother, which I will explain to my father in my next letter. Thence comes my wish to liberate and rescue her as soon as possible. At half-past ten or eleven I go home; but this

* Lady Wallace.

depends on the mother's humour, or on my patience in bearing it. Owing to the number of concerts, and also the uncertainty whether I may not be summoned to one place or another, I cannot rely on my evening writing, so it is my custom (especially when I come home early) to write for a time before going to bed. I often sit up writing till one, and rise again at six. Dearest sister, if you believe that I can ever forget you and my beloved father, then——; but I say no more."

Then he forwards to his home copies of his sonatas, and his last rondo which he had composed specially for himself, and which no one else but his "darling sister" must play. He begs to present his father with a snuff-box and a couple of watch-ribands—the box very pretty, bearing the painting of an English scene; the watch-ribands quite the fashion. It is clear that in the submission to the inevitable, the Salzburg Mozarts have been forced into an acknowledgment of Constanze Weber's relation to the family; and so on sending his sister "two caps, the newest Viennese make," Mozart adds, what may either detract from or enhance their value in the eyes of the recipient, that they are both the work of his "beloved Constanze's hands." Constanze sends pretty messages of her own with them, including her regards to the awful Kapell-Meister, and an affectionate embrace to the less formidable sister, to whom, after consulting with her lover, she further ventures to offer "a little souvenir." He must apologize for her, and say that being poor she has nothing worth sending; but she hopes that his sister will take the will for the deed. The cross is, like the watch-riband, "quite the fashion," if it have no other value, and "the heart, transfixed by an arrow, is some-

thing like another heart with an arrow, which already belongs somehow to Nannerl, and would please her the more on that account."

The Mozarts return their thanks for the tokens, and for these thanks Constanze again figuratively embraces Nannerl, and kisses the Kapell-Meister's hand. In due time Nannerl has her gift for her sister-in-law elect. Finally, Mozart becomes the willing medium between the two women of interchanges of patterns of fringe of their own work, and discussions of what sort of fringe ought to be worn with Saxon-quilted and gros de Turc dresses.

To meet a fancy of Constanze Weber's for the fugues of Handel and Bach, Mozart desired to turn his attention more to the composition of fugues, while he was much engaged with preparing for representation his opera of the *Entführung* (the Seraglio), which had to encounter social and professional opposition, but which was at last performed, by the command of the Emperor, on the 12th of July, 1782, and was afterwards given repeatedly to crowded houses, and in the end with decided success. It won the approval of Gluck, though he might be said to belong to a different school in music from that of Mozart. Mozart wrote that the opera was performed on one occasion at Gluck's desire; that the veteran composer was very complimentary to his junior on his work; and that he (Mozart) was to dine with Gluck.

The course of Mozart's love was running even more roughly than before, what with girlish follies and pets on his mistress's part, what with the imprudent interposition of the Baroness Waldstädten, and what with the coarse tyranny of Madame Weber, who threatened, if her daughter were withdrawn from her authority, to send the Viennese

police to take Constanze by force out of the baroness's house. After importuning his father for his consent to an immediate marriage, and after waiting in vain for a reply to the petition, Mozart took the consent for granted, and celebrated a quiet wedding, in the presence of the bride's mother and her guardian, with Constanze Weber, on the 6th of August, 1782, when he was twenty-six and she eighteen years of age.

The very day after the wedding—for the bridegroom records the dates in all honesty and candour to his father —Mozart received two letters, containing a reluctant consent and blessing, coupled with a somewhat ungracious declaration that the Kapell-Meister could no longer expect assistance from his son in the elder man's distressed circumstances, caused by his efforts to promote that son's welfare; and that Wolfgang, in return, must not hope, either now or hereafter, to receive anything from his father, and that the father wished the bride to be told this.*

Mozart earnestly and gently deprecated any intention on his and his wife's part of seeking aid from the Kapell-Meister, or any wish to escape from filial and fraternal obligations, and caused his wife to write to the same effect. As if to give greater confidence to his father, Mozart adds, in his next letter, how he and his wife had not only performed the usual special devotions which accompany the marriage of good Catholics, but had for some time been in the habit of attending mass and taking the Holy Communion together, as they found that they never "prayed so fervently, or confessed so piously," as side by side.

* Lady Wallace.

With regard to Constanze Weber's real merits or demerits, if we look at her with Mozart's loving eyes from first to last, we shall find no fault in her. On the other hand, when we consider Mozart's former relations with the Webers, we find it was not probable that they should furnish him with a good wife. No doubt she gave him all that she had to give; no doubt in the fulness of his own nature he was satisfied with what she gave; not the less Constanze Mozart appears to have proved a weak, self-engrossed woman, letting the burden of her bad health fall heavily on her husband, thinking more of her own wants than of his aspirations, and, what is most difficult to forgive of all, being decidedly inclined to measure his worth and genius by its estimation in the eyes of the world, and by the return which it brought in money and money's equivalents.

At the time of the marriage Mozart declared that both he and Constanze were resolved to resist any design of Madame Weber's to get them to live with her in the apartments which she had to let, because they knew her too well. He mentioned that, on the second visit of the couple to Madame Weber after their marriage, quarrelling and wrangling began again, and he had to withdraw his poor wife in tears, and he and she did not intend to go back except for those great occasions in a German calendar—a birthday or name-day of the mother or sister. On the other hand, husband and wife said that they were looking eagerly forward to a visit to Salzburg, in order to present Stanzerl for the first time personally to the Kapell-Meister and Nannerl. Before his marriage, Mozart had vowed in his heart that when he should bring Constanze

to Salzburg as his wife, he would compose a mass for the occasion, and have it performed there.*

After all, the early visit was not paid, and the mass lay half written for some time, while Mozart seems in the course of years to have lived on tolerably cordial terms with his wife's relations. The home which he occupied immediately after his marriage did not lay him open to the charge of extravagance, for he could tell the careful father that it was in the very same house on the *Hohen Brück, Numero* 387, to which he had carried his young son for a lodging fourteen years before. Mozart's ideas had not enlarged alarmingly, so far as house-keeping was concerned, in the interval; indeed, we can judge of what this home must have been from Mozart's description of other apartments also on the Hohen Brück, to which the couple removed shortly afterwards, and where Mozart wrote that he had "a room immensely long and very narrow, a bedroom, an ante-room, and a large kitchen." There happened to be two good-sized apartments adjoining the Mozarts in the same house, and in these the young couple, during the festival of the carnival, gave a ball of their own, to the expenses of which, however, each gentleman, as a matter of course, paid two florins. Mozart wrote, "We began at six o'clock in the evening, and finished at seven. What, only one hour! No, no; at seven o'clock next morning."

After giving up a project of again trying his fortune in Paris, and while struggling to secure a certain income, more necessary now than ever, by his pupils and by concerts, at twenty of which he performed in 1783, in the

* Lady Wallace.

middle of the money difficulties which attended him all his life, and which were complicated soon after his marriage by troubles about the settlement made on his wife in consideration of her little dowry of five hundred florins, the great period of Mozart's unsurpassed splendour and fertility of genius began, when from 1782 to 1791, within ten years, he composed in turn his great works *Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and the *Flauto Magico*. Of the last nine years of Mozart's life Mr. Haweis writes, "The rest of Mozart's life can be compared to nothing but a torch burning out rapidly in the wind. Unwearied alike as a composer and an artist, he kept pouring forth symphonies, sonatas, and operas, whilst disease could not shake his nerve as an executant, and the hand of death found him unwilling to relinquish the pen of the ready writer."

In July, 1783, after the birth of their first child, Mozart and his wife at last visited Salzburg, remaining there for three months, during which he busied himself with the plot of a purely comic opera, *The Goose of Cairo;* and Madame Mozart doubtless enjoyed the game of skittles to which—perhaps to please her father-in-law—she had let herself be announced as very partial, when Mozart wrote to the Kapell-Meister to have the skittle-ground belonging to the old house in Mirabelle Platze ready in time, and immediately afterwards added that his wife had always a lurking fear that she might not please his father, because she was not pretty. "But I do my best to console her," concludes the enamoured husband, "by assuring her that my dearest father thinks more of inward than of outward beauty."

Back again in Vienna, Mozart was much engaged in concerts with special reference to his own and to his sister-

in-law Madame Lange's concerts, for which he wrote new or supplied old arias. Mozart's own concerts consisted almost entirely of his music, with some new piece if possible, and for a conclusion an extemporaneous performance by Mozart, which his boundless invention and matchless skill enabled him to supply with ease, to the wonder and admiration of his audience.

He performed very frequently at Prince Esterhazy's concerts; and with Haydn, so long connected with the Esterhazy family, Mozart had a warm and affectionate friendship, calling the elder man jestingly by a name which had much meaning on Mozart's lips—Papa Haydn.

In 1784, Nannerl Mozart, then in her thirty-fourth year, her intended marriage with M. D'Yppold having been broken off on account of the very remote prospect of its ever being celebrated, married a widower who could boast the titles of Reichsfreiherr von Berchthold zu Sonnenburg, and who was also a Salzburg Hofrath and warden of the Convent of St. Gilgen, of which Mozart's mother had been a foster-child.*

Mozart and his wife were not able to be present at his sister's marriage, but he wrote her an affectionate letter of congratulation, mentioning that he and his wife's only concern was for their dear father, who was then left to live alone, and strongly advising that the Kapell-Meister should either petition the archbishop for a retiring pension and join his daughter and her husband at St. Gilgen; or, if the archbishop refused the pension, demand a discharge, and come, as his son would prefer, to reside with him in Vienna. Neither of these arrangements was carried out. A dangerous illnecs with which Mozart was

* Lady Wallace.

seized in the autumn of 1784, and which his father called rheumatic fever—caught from exposure to cold in leaving the theatre one night—and passing into putrid fever, threatened to end his life. Among Mozart's dear friends from that date was his physician, Barisovi, to whom he believed he owed his life, together with a young banker, Bridi, and Gottfried von Jaquin, a Viennese of some distinction.

The old man visited his son in the winter of 1785, remaining with him from February to April, entering with unfailing zest into the musical entertainments of the great capital of music, and surely deriving a measure of his reward in the unrivalled attainments of his son. In the same year Mozart had brought out his six famous quartetts dedicated to his dear friend Haydn; and on hearing these, the simple-hearted enthusiastic fellow-composer reported to the gratified father, "I declare to you, before God and on the faith of an honest man, that your son is the greatest composer who ever lived."* A curious and unfortunate result of the elder Mozart's visit to his son was that the younger persuaded the elder "to become a Free Mason, like himself;" and to this cause has been attributed the destruction of Wolfgang Mozart's later letters to his father—with one exception, as it is supposed that they may have contained allusions only intended for the members of the order.

In November, 1785, Mozart, then twenty-nine years of age, was so engrossed by the composition of his *Nozze de Figaro* as to have put off his pupils to an extent that caused him great pecuniary embarrassment. At the same time he had to endure much professional persecution from

* Haweis.

the party in Vienna who desired to drive German music and German composers from the opera, replacing them by Italian music, Italian singers, and Italian composers.

Figaro was given with the support of the Emperor, who proved a steady if not a very munificent friend to Mozart, on the 1st of May, 1785. The characters of Susanna and Basilio (in *Figaro*) were originally sustained by our compatriots, Anna Selina Storace and Michael Kelly. Mozart formed a warm friendship with them and with Stephen Storace, and thus arose his first design of visiting England.* M. Schindler writes, in his life of Beethoven, "Mozart experienced similar, nay, still more painful mortifications, calumnies, and even depreciation of his abilities on account of his opera *Die Entführung*, and from the singers. . . . Those cabals and persecutions were carried much further on the occasion of his succeeding opera *Figaro;* so that, on the conclusion of the second act, Mozart, filled with indignation, went to the Emperor Joseph in his box and complained of the singers, who were brought back to their duty by a severe reprimand from the monarch." At the second performance, according to the elder Mozart (and so strong was the opposition which Mozart, in spite of the excellence of his work, was then experiencing, that testimonies of public approval were eagerly hailed), there were five encores; and at the third, seven encores—one of these, a short duett, being encored three times. In spite of the efforts of his opponents, *Figaro* was a triumph, and was represented many times during several years. But Mozart's private circumstances were becoming so bad as to deprive him of the joy of success.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

His third child was born to him; his wife was sicklier and more helpless than ever. He gladly accepted an invitation to Prague, which might bring into his exhausted purse a little more money. Mr. Haweis supplies this explanation of Mozart's constant poverty in the midst of his industry, and with his own non-expensive habits, "His works were miserably paid for. . . . The nobles gave him watches and snuff-boxes, but very little coin." At Prague, to which Mozart had reason to be attached, where he found nothing talked of, "nothing played, nothing whistled or sung but *Figaro*," "no opera so crowded as *Figaro*, nothing but *Figaro*," where he was received by the musical world not with factious jealousy, but with open arms, he received from the impresario a commission to write for the following autumn an opera-buffa, and the subject *Don Giovanni* was selected.

While engrossed with his conception, Mozart heard of the serious illness of his father, and wrote immediately the last of his many tender and filial letters referring to the highest source of strength and consolation, and imploring his father in case of the worst not to keep it from his son, but to let him know at once, that he might be in his father's arms "with as much speed as possible." The Kapell-Meister rallied for a time, but died suddenly in May, 1787, deeply lamented by his son, who writes in the middle of his many distractions to comfort his sister, to assure her of a loving brother, from whom she no longer needed the pecuniary assistance which he would have been very willing, though little able, to render her.

The first performance of *Don Giovanni* took place at Prague on the 29th October, 1787, when Mozart was in

his thirty-first year, and met with an enthusiastic reception.

I have already mentioned in my sketch of Haydn Mozart's intention of following Haydn to England, and working for the London concerts.

Years before that arrangement was made, the fear of Mozart's settling in England like Handel, and being so far lost to Germany, is supposed to have had its influence in securing the nomination of Mozart to the post of Imperial Chamber Musician in the room of Gluck. For this office he had a salary of eight hundred gulden, with regard to which he wrote bitterly, "too much for what I do, and too little for what I could do;"* since in spite of his appointment he was only sparingly employed, and not even the successful representation of *Don Giovanni* in Vienna, with the other additions to his income, could relieve him from pressing money claims. He had repeatedly to throw himself on the generosity of a friend and brother-mason, Herr Puchberg, a merchant in Vienna, to obtain loans of money. In reference to these circumstances, Mr. Haweis records the incident that, in 1790, "We find Mozart in the zenith of his fame and popularity standing dinnerless and in a state of destitution at the door of his old friend Puchberg." Mr. Haweis adds, "It is difficult to account for this, as he (Mozart) certainly made more money than many musicians. His purse, indeed, was always open to his friends; he was obliged to mix on equal terms with his superiors in rank; he had an invalid wife for whom he procured every comfort. There must, indeed, have been bad management, but we can scarcely read his letters and accuse him of wanton extravagance."

* Lady Wallace.

In 1787, Mozart was striving to retrench in his mode of living by removing to a country suburb, where he should not be exposed to so many visits, and should be enabled to work harder. To this house, in the *Währinger Gasse bei den 5 Sternen, Numero* 135, he had a garden, in which he could hear the songs of birds, such as he was fond of keeping in his room, from the old days of the canary at Salzburg.

In the course of the summer of 1788 Mozart wrote the grand symphonies in C major (called Jupiter), G minor, and E flat. They were completed within a period of six weeks. They are held by many critics "the grandest, most impassioned, and the loveliest works in instrumental music." But the Emperor gave him nothing to do except to compose dance music for the masked balls in the Imperial Ridonte Hall (*Lady Wallace*); Mozart, therefore, ventured on a musical tour, the first since the days of his youth, in the north-east of Germany, having the advantage of travelling in the carriage of a friend and pupil, who was about to visit his Silesian property and Berlin. With this friend, Prince Lichnowsky, Mozart visited Prague, Dresden, Leipsic, Berlin, writing the fondest letters to his wife, giving her every particular of his tour which he supposes will interest her, telling her that her portrait is his companion, and what loving nonsense he addresses to it, commenting thus on the nonsense:—"I know I have written something very foolish (for the world, at all events), but not in the least foolish for us who love each other so fondly; this is the sixth day that I have been absent from you, and, by Heavens! it seems to me a year." Yet these tender letters contain significant indications to whoever will read them carefully of Stanzerl's

inferiority in many other respects than intellect to her husband. Along with other kind and careful charges, he says that she will not only be careful of his honour and hers, but will be equally guarded as to appearances, and then entreats her not to be angry at this request, for indeed it ought to make her love him still better. He asks her (in a strange necessity from an absent husband to an affectionate wife, and from such a husband to so dearly held a wife) to enter more into detail in her letters—whether her friends visit her as they had promised—whether a certain portrait was progressing—what her mode of life in all things which naturally interest him. He reminds her a little reproachfully, but with simple exact reckoning, that he in the hurry and distraction of travel had written her eleven letters, to which she had sent him but six replies, with a blank of seventeen days, so that surely one of her letters must have been lost. At last, when, in spite of the apparent success of the tour, it proved a comparative financial failure, he writes with something like a pathetic appeal in the breaking of a painful fact to her, which implies what has been confirmed elsewhere, that his Stanzerl was of the mind to esteem her husband's achievements simply according to the gold for which they were sold. "My darling little wife, when I return you must rejoice more in *me* than in the money I bring." We can only trust that the weak, indolent, exacting little woman complied with the request contained in the same letter, that he hoped she would drive out to meet him at the first stage on his return home. Her brother-in-law and his good friends the Puchbergs might accompany her. She must not forget to bring their boy Carl, and she must have some confidential person to drive in Mozart's carriage to

the custom-house to rid him of the trouble of the luggage, and enable him to return at once with all his friends. She must remember all this. Mozart was burdened with all this forethought and with its minutest directions to the silly, selfish wife whom he cherished, and who was so incapable of fully appreciating him, as well as with his own load of care and gift of genius.

At Leipsic Mozart first became acquainted with the vocal compositions of Sebastian Bach, which filled him with delight. As soon as he was at home again Mozart began the stringed quartetts which were a commission from the King of Prussia, Frederic William II., and executed them in D major, receiving for it no less a sum than a hundred Friederichs d'or, in addition to a gold snuff-box.—(*Lady Wallace.*)

But poor Constanze was again ill, grieving her husband's heart and exhausting the last supply which he had procured with so much wear and tear of body and mind for the family exchequer. He rode out occasionally this summer at five o'clock in the morning, but would previously write a note in the form of a prescription to be placed beside his wife's bed, and read on her awaking, "Good morning, my darling wife! I hope that you slept well, that you were undisturbed, that you will not rise too early, that you will not catch cold, nor stoop too much, nor overstrain yourself, nor scold your servants, nor stumble over the threshold of the adjoining room. Spare yourself all household worries till I come back; may no evil befall you. I shall be at home at — o'clock punctually." He was once more in extreme distress for money, pinching himself to enable his wife to attend those German baths to which she was ordered, and to which she was in the habit of

resorting—and at the same time imploring his old friend Puchberg to accommodate him—if not with a sufficient loan to insure him permanent relief, and which a prospect of improvement in Mozart's circumstances gave him the hope of meeting, at least with temporary aid "in God's name."

The prospect of improvement, which apparently consisted in the offer of an appointment from the King of Prussia, might be said to vanish entirely with Mozart's refusing the appointment after an interview with his own Emperor, who at last gave Mozart an order to write a comic opera; but, with the ill-fortune which finally overwhelmed the composer, Joseph II. died before hearing the opera, and failed to do anything for him. Putting off his creditors, and petitioning the new emperor, labouring at his quartetts with his head racked by rheumatic pains, arranging Handel's *Cecilia* and *Alexander's Feast* under Haydn's patron, Von Swieten,* to be performed in the Great Hall of the Imperial Court Library, Mozart had the mortification and well-nigh despair of learning that he was not likely to find favour in the eyes of the new emperor Leopold II.; that his petition was rejected; that while other composers, including Haydn, were encouraged to produce their works, he (Mozart) was made conspicuous by being passed over, and was not even required in his office of Imperial Chamber Musician to play at court.

Mozart was once more reduced to seek the support of foreign countries, but proposed first to visit Frankfort on the occasion of the great gathering to the new emperor's

* Mozart's orchestral additions to Handel's *Messiah*, *Ode to St. Cecilia*, &c., &c., were intended to supply the absence of an organ.

coronation, although he had received the slight of not being appointed to attend the court-festival, in his capacity of court composer.

To defray the expense of this expedition, in which his equally poor brother-in-law, Hofer, accompanied him at the latter's expense, Mozart had to pawn a portion of his silver plate. In the desperation and defiance of the moment, he foolishly spent part of the money thus obtained in buying a carriage, that he might travel somewhat in the style of a great composer. From Frankfort he wrote anxious, hopeful letters to his wife, one of them beginning characteristically, "If I only had a letter from you, then all would be right." He returned by Mannheim and Munich, being cheered by a request from the Elector that Mozart should stay and play at his concert before the King of Naples, and enjoying a meeting with his old friends.

The beginning of the last year of Mozart's short life, when he was thirty-five years of age, saw Joseph Haydn's departure for England, where Mozart was to follow him; but the friends parted with forebodings too well justified by Mozart's overtaxed energies and failing health, and they never met again. Mozart was "busy beyond conception" in the most fruitful of all the fruitful years of his life, into which he brought no less than three noble works—his *Titus*, his *Flauto Magico*, and his *Requiem*. Of this crowning time Mr. Haweis writes that Mozart's friends "looked upon his wondrous career, as we have since looked upon Mendelssohn's, with a certain sad bewildered astonishment. That prodigious childhood—that spring mellow with all the fruits of autumn—that startling haste, as 'the rapid of life shoots to the fall,' we understand it now. "The

world had waited eight centuries for him, and he was only to remain for a moment."—(*Oulibicheff.*)

In May, Mozart had obtained one object for which he had tried—the place of assistant Kapell-Meister to the Stephan Church, of which the old Kapell-Meister long survived his assistant. In June Constanze Mozart was absent at the baths at Baden, to which he had written beforehand and bespoken a lodging for his wife, to be procured by an old friend, a schoolmaster and choir-leader whom Mozart had assisted with compositions, and for whom, on the occasion of one of Constanze's previous visits to the baths, he had written his *Ave Verum.*—(*Lady Wallace.*) The letter to the schoolmaster, in which Mozart gives particular instructions about the lodgings, and other letters to his wife, in which he is not only harassed by the fear that she may not receive a supply of money in time, but lest she should neglect precautions for her health, which a little consideration and care, or a little sense would have taught her, are still extant. One of the letters to his wife has this passage—"Madame Leitgeb tied my neckcloth for me to-day; but how? Good Heavens! I told her repeatedly, 'This is the way my wife does it,'—but it was all in vain."

Mozart was writing the *Flauto Magico*, gratis, for the benefit of the theatre director, who was himself in reduced circumstances. At the beginning of his task, he resided for some time—probably during one of his wife's many absences—with the director Schikaneder, in order to be near the manager for theatrical directions. Schikaneder's life and society were of the loose and fast description to which Mozart had shown himself from youth altogether averse, but his temporary association with

Schikaneder and his set, at this time, is said to have brought upon Mozart an unfounded accusation of being himself a dissipated, profligate man.

Mozart received at this time the curious commission for the *Requiem* which worked with such fatal effect on his nerves, in the exhausted condition of his mind and body. The simple facts of the case are, that an Austrian nobleman, named Count Walsegg, whose wife was recently dead, desired to honour her memory by a *Requiem* which Mozart should produce, but of which the nobleman, with little honesty in his grief, was to have the credit. The commission, which was conducted with the utmost secrecy through a confidential servant, who withheld from Mozart the name of the principal in the transaction, included the offer to the composer of a sum differently stated as a hundred or as fifty ducats. Mozart in his needy circumstances, having promised to his wife to work hard to earn money, caught eagerly at this dubious opportunity, and resigning the *Flauto Magico*, which was all but completed, set himself with heart and soul to compose the *Requiem*. Probably his preference for solemn and sacred music, as well as the gravity of spirit which was deepening in him, gave him a special inclination to the task. He was forced to lay the *Requiem* aside, however. He had a summons, which he could not afford to neglect, from the Bohemian Estates to attend the coronation of the Emperor, and to celebrate it by the composition of a festal opera. Accordingly, he set out with his wife for Prague, and even during the journey was busy with his opera of *La Clemenza di Tito*, which was completed and rehearsed in nineteen days. It failed to excite the enthusiasm which had been created by his former operas written for the theatre at Prague. Hitherto

his residences there had been his seasons, not only of greatest triumph, but of greatest relaxation. But now he was disappointed by what he was swift to regard as a loss of public favour; and though his friends were as kind as ever, he withdrew sadly into himself and his work, and spoke of this visit as the last.

Once more in Vienna, he set himself feverishly to regain what he viewed as lost ground, by working without intermission at what was still to be done for the *Flauto Magico*, which had a masonic text that particularly interested him. This strain of work and worry was certain to have only one end in a man like Mozart. Years before his father's last illness he had written to his father a nobly consolatory letter referring to death as "the true goal of life," as "this good and faithful friend of man;" and he had declared that the image had no longer anything alarming, but rather something peaceful and consoling to him. He thanked his heavenly Father for vouchsafing to grant him the happiness and the opportunity to learn that it was the key to men's true felicity. He never lay down at night, he wrote, without thinking that, young as he was, he might be no more before the next morning dawned; and he pointed the reflection by quoting the example of the death of his dearest and best friend, Count von Hatzfeld, at only one-and-thirty years—just the same age as himself. These broodings on the probability of an early death, reverent, and resigned, and even soberly cheerful as they were in his better health, began to prey upon and depress Mozart in his decline of strength and oppression of work. He conceived the morbid fancy that the *Requiem* he had begun would not only serve for himself, but that the tall man in grey who had appeared so strangely, withholding

his credentials but pressing on the work, and who had started up by the carriage-window on the eve of Mozart's journey to Prague, pulling Constanze's dress, and inquiring about the fulfilment of Mozart's promise, was a supernatural messenger thus intimating to him his approaching decease.

Mozart had been again left alone, Constanze having returned to Baden, to which place he had the satisfaction of communicating to her what was the last gleam of brightness in his life that the *Flauto Magico*, performed for the first time on the 30th September, 1791, with Mozart conducting at the piano, had been received with the warmest welcome, and from the symphony to the last chorus was hailed with the shouts of "Bravo!" "Bello!"

In the letters of this date to his wife, in which he writes, after the complete success of the opera, as if a burden had been lifted off him, he tells of his good appetite and his sound sleep, and of having taken, in default of her, his boy Carl and her mother to the opera. With regard to the last he adds good-humouredly, "We may well say of mamma that she sees the opera, but not that she hears it." He ends the last letter he ever wrote to his wife with a kind "Kiss Sophie" (his youngest sister-in-law) "for me. To Susmag" (Lady Wallace has the note, that Susmag was without doubt Mozart's youngest child Wolfgang, then a child of a few months old, and of whom the father was wont to prophesy that the child would be a true Mozart because when he cried he always did so on the precise key in which his father happened to be playing at the moment) "I send two good fillips on the nose and a hearty pull of his hair. A thousand compliments to Stroll" (his friend, the schoolmaster and choir-leader). "Adieu!

The hour strikes! Farewell! We shall meet again." The concluding words, the last known to have been written by Mozart, are a quotation from the grand trio of the *Flauto Magico.*

When Constanze arrived at Vienna she was startled, by the ashen paleness of her husband, from the contemplation of her own ailments and requirements. She strove to withdraw him from his absorbing task of writing the *Requiem,* and induced him one autumn morning to drive with her on the Prater; but Mozart, looking on the fallen leaves, began to talk of death, and confided to her that he believed the *Requiem* which so engrossed him would be his own. Extremely alarmed, the wife called in a friend and physician, who at once ordered a respite from the work at which Mozart had continued frequently long after his dinner and far into the night, till he had fallen back fainting in his chair. The period of rest was followed by a short rally, in which Mozart demanded his score, and wrote the masonic cantata, *Das Lob der Freundschaft,* which he was able to conduct himself at a festival of his own masonic lodge in the month of November.

The resumption of work was followed by the return in an aggravated form of his nameless illness. He took to bed, and became so violently ill that even the cherished canary bird had to be withdrawn from the room, as he could no more bear its singing; still, however, he occupied himself with his *Requiem,* impressing upon his pupil Süssmayr the manner in which he desired it to be finished.

In the *Requiem* Mozart is said to have expressed all the tender contrition of a sinner whose sins are forgiven. He expressly told his wife that it was a great consolation

to him to remember that the Lord, to whom he had drawn near in humble and child-like faith, had suffered and died for him in love and compassion. In this spirit he wrote his *Requiem*, working at it after he was confined to his sick-bed. "When he had finished a part, he would cause it to be sung, even taking the alt himself in his delicate falsetto."—(*Lady Wallace.*) The day before his death he had the score brought to him in bed, and while several friends who were with him took the soprano, the tenor, and the bass parts, Mozart chimed in with his part, till, at the first bars of the *Lacremosa*, he suddenly burst into tears, and laid aside the score.

With the ruling passion still strong in him, Mozart continued also to take a fond interest in the successful celebration of the *Flauto Magico*. In the evenings, at the time of the performance, he was in the habit of placing his watch beside him, and following the various scenes in spirit. "Now the first act is over; now is the time for the great 'Queen of Night;'" and on that very day before his death, when he broke down in attempting to join in a portion of the *Requiem*, he said to Constanze, "Oh that I could only once more hear my *Flauto Magico!*" humming, in a scarcely audible voice, the "Bird-Catcher." Kapell-Meister Roser, who was sitting at his bedside, went to the piano and sang the air, which cheered Mozart.—(*Lady Wallace.*)

Of this period Mr. Haweis writes—"Vienna was at that time ringing with the fame of his last opera. They brought him the rich appointment of organist to the Cathedral of St. Stephen, for which he had been longing all his life. Managers besieged his door with handfuls of gold, summoning him to compose something for them—

too late! He lay, with swollen limbs and a burning head, waiting another summons."

The best account of Mozart's last illness was ultimately furnished, for his biography, by his sister-in-law, Sophie, who helped his poor distracted wife to nurse him. Sophie, after she was Frau Haibel, recalls each particular of those mournful days. How the wife and sister had made, to shelter the invalid from the cold, a wadded dressing-gown, in which he had seemed to take great pleasure. How the sister-in-law had gone one day from her mother's house to see him, had received from him the cheerful message to take to her mother, that he should be able to visit the old lady "during the octave of her name-day," when fancying him better, and having some youthful amusement in view, the girl had made up her mind not to pay her usual visit on the next day—Sunday, 5th December, 1791. But a sudden fear crossed her mind, and caused her to reverse her resolution and hurry to Mozart's house; and there she found him much worse, with both himself and her sister apprehending his approaching death. Indeed, he said to his sister-in-law,—"Oh, my dear Sophie, it is well that you are come, and you must stay to-night; you must see me die," he added, "and who can comfort my Constanze if you don't stay here?" Sophie hurried to bring a priest from the neighbouring St. Peter's, and to tell her mother of the melancholy change. When she reached the house in the Ranheustein Gasse again, she found Süssmayr, Mozart's pupil, sitting by the sick man's bed, on which the score of the *Requiem* was spread out. Mozart was giving his last instructions to his pupil for the completion of the work, while he was begging his wife to keep his death secret till she had told

the musician Albrechtsberger of it, for he was the man who ought to have the vacant office of assistant Kapell-Meister at the Stephan Church.

Mr. Haweis describes the end thus—"As the last faintness stole over him, he turned to Süssmayr; his lips moved feebly—he was trying to indicate a peculiar effect of kettle-drums in the score. It was the last act of expiring thought; his head sank gently back; he seemed to fall into a deep and tranquil sleep. In another hour he had ceased to breathe."

Mozart died in 1791, at the age of thirty-five. Constanze's grief was violent at first—she refused to be removed from the body, and flung herself on the bed, praying that the disease might be contagious, and that she might be struck next. However, she soon permitted herself to be taken from the house, and placed in the care of some friends; while Baron von Swieten made the arrangements for the funeral. These were of the plainest description, Mozart having died so poor a man that his whole estate in money, books, and music was reckoned at little more than eighty-three florins.—(*Lady Wallace.*)

According to Sophie Weber's account, crowds of people passed the house "weeping and lamenting Mozart." But this statement seems hardly consistent with what follows. Mozart's body had been clothed by his attached servant in the black dress of the masonic brotherhood, and stretched upon a bier in his study beside his piano. The corpse was removed on the following day for interment in the simplest, plainest manner. The day was stormy, and the few friends who heard the benediction pronounced over the coffin in the Chapel of the Cross, belonging to the Church of St. Stephan, withdrew from the procession before it

reached the churchyard. Not a single friend stood by Mozart's open grave. That grave was in the common burial-ground of the poor, where from fifteen to twenty coffins are deposited together, and removed every ten years to make way for other coffins. It was Mozart's servant, not his wife, who proposed that a cross should mark Mozart's last resting-place, and the proposal was met by the reply on Constanze's part, that the cross was sure to be supplied and erected by the parish. Before she visited the grave, so long an interval must have elapsed, that while no cross had been erected, the old sexton had given place to a new man, and the knowledge of the spot where Mozart had been buried was lost irretrievably.*

Constanze was well cared for. The Emperor allowed her a small pension, and patronised for her benefit a concert, the receipts of which paid Mozart's debts, amounting to about £300. Further concerts, to do honour to the dead maestro, followed. Finally, in 1809, eighteen years after her husband's death, when she was a widow of forty-six years of age, Constanze made a second, and this time a very prudent, marriage with the Danish councillor, Baron von Missen, who undertook to provide for the education of her two sons. From this beginning of worldly prosperity, it is said, though the statement sounds paradoxical, not only did Mozart's memory revive in her heart, but with it "a feeling of pride in him which hitherto the remembrance of

* There was a wild report in Vienna, at the time of Mozart's death, that he had been poisoned by the Italian composer Salieri. Salieri himself, long afterwards, on his deathbed in the public hospital, Vienna, spoke of the report, and solemnly denied it to the young composer Moscheles. Of course, the story was without foundation. But Moscheles adds, that so far as poisoning many an hour of Mozart's existence by intrigues, Salieri was certainly guilty.

the incapacity of the great man to provide an adequate subsistence for his family had in some degree subdued." In short, finding the big world outside her little world, had come to look upon Mozart as a great composer, Constanze also began to comprehend and believe that the genius, who had loved her small personality so well, had been great, so that his love had been a distinction which should mark her out from other women, and preserve her name and history long after her poor charms and virtues would have been altogether forgotten. Constanze, therefore, set herself—with the assistance of her second husband, who derived a reflected glory from her connection with Mozart—to collect, preserve, and give to posterity all the memorials which remained of the composer.

Of Mozart's six children, four died in early childhood: with regard to the two sons who survived their father, the elder filled for many years a government office at Milan. The younger was the namesake of his father, born in the last year of Mozart's life, and was the child of whom he prophesied that he would be a true Mozart, because he always cried in the key in which his father happened to be playing. This second Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, was actually trained to be a musician by the kindly offices of Haydn, Albrechtsberger, and others, and did come before the world as a composer and pianist, but earned no distinction save that which was his by inheritance in the name he bore.—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*) Nannerl Mozart, who, like her father, the Kapell-Meister of Salzburg, and her faithful mother, had not needed the world's verdict to convince her that their Wolfgang was a great composer, survived her brother many years. On the death of her

husband, the court official, she returned to her profession as a music-teacher in Salzburg, and became quite blind before she died at a great age.*

Mozart's private character, which was in his time attacked and slandered, has been, by the searching investigations of recent years, found free from any stain, save that of improvidence. His letters prove amply the dutiful, loving spirit of the boy and man. Mozart's portrait, taken in his early prime, represents him as a handsome man, having an ample forehead, regular features, cleft chin, dreamy eyes, with well-arched brows. His hair is powdered, and in a tie; he wears the high-collared, large-buttoned coat, plain neckcloth, and wide-frilled shirt of the period.

The *Requiem* which was Mozart's last work, and has so solemn and sad an association with the great composer, became in time a very vexed question. Mozart had been in the habit of finishing each piece before he wrote it down, but the state of his health when he was composing the *Requiem* induced him to put down his first sketches on paper. Constanze had committed all these scraps to her husband's pupil, Süssmayr, who, from this material, from Mozart's verbal communications, and from having heard him play or sing unwritten bits of the *Requiem*, completed the work, giving one copy of it to the widow and forwarding another to Count Walsegg, from whom Mozart had received the ill-fated commission. At the benefit concert which the Emperor permitted Constanze's friends to undertake for her in the Court Opera House the *Requiem* was given for the first time, and was heard with such interest that transcripts were got from the score, and per-

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

formed in other places, always as Mozart's work. Of course the announcement completely circumvented Count Walsegg's foolish and deceitful object in ordering the *Requiem*. However, the count remained silent on his claims for a period of years. In the end he instituted legal proceedings against the widow of Mozart, but was induced to relinquish his suit by her second husband, Baron von Missen. In the meantime Süssmayr declared that he was the author of those portions of the original completed score which were in his handwriting, and the widow so far submitted to his pretensions, as to sell the copyright of a score, in which the portions which had been in the respective handwritings of Mozart and Süssmayr, were signed with their initials. To increase the confusion it was found that the handwritings had resembled each other so closely as to give rise to the rumour that Count Walsegg's copy, written out for him by Süssmayr, was entirely in the handwriting of Mozart. The conclusion of the whole matter is that to Mozart's creative spirit is owing the general plan and outline of the *Requiem*, and that many separate passages were also purely his work, while Süssmayr had received his master's ideas even for those portions which he worked out.

Moscheles in his day strongly deprecated the habit of playing Mozart in England "with whole numbers cut out, and other popular English melodies substituted—a fearful desecration!"

Of Mozart's music it is as difficult to write critically as it is to write of Raphael's paintings or of Shakespeare's dramas. While other musicians have excelled in one branch of their art, or have, even when they have reached sublime heights, as in the case of Beethoven, been either

liable to be out of proportion, or subject to limits in the development of their gift, Mozart's genius in its expression was as perfectly balanced and as widely sympathetic as it was at the same time grand and sweet. He was great in harmony and great in melody—full, in all subtlety, of that learning which is so thorough that it ceases to be seen, and results in art which does not appear art, but higher nature. While he wrote strains fit to thrill through human hearts (his song of "La ci darem" was popular all over Europe), he never needed to descend to the sensuousness, extravagant passion, and florid ornament by which the later Italian school won popularity. He was so full of noble, chaste dignity and simplicity even in these themes, on which he wrote, which were farthest removed from religion, and which might have been most abused, that his art may be said to have been in its pure earnestness a religion to itself. His work was in some sense progressive. *Don Giovanni* was greater than *Figaro*, and in certain respects *Il Flauto Magico* and the *Requiem* far excelled both. The greatest musicians who followed Mozart, including Beethoven and Mendelssohn, venerated Mozart's work. It has been left for the great new school, with Richard Wagner at its head, whose mission in music seems to be not unlike that of the præ-Raphaelites in painting, to question the very principles on which Mozart's compositions are built, and to assert daringly that the gentle science must go back to the beginning and rear fresh structures on foundations till lately undreamt of and hardly tried.

CHAPTER IV.

Beethoven, 1770—1827.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN was born at Bonn on the 17th December, 1770. He was the son of Johann van Beethoven, tenor singer in the electoral chapel, and the grandson of Ludwig van Beethoven, supposed to have been a native of Maëstricht, a music director, bass singer, and performer of operas of his own composition. The *van* before the name of Beethoven was of Dutch origin, and did not involve a patent of nobility. Beethoven's father was a dissipated and profligate man, for whom the son could not retain respect. The grandfather died when the composer was only three years of age, and for the elder man's memory Beethoven cherished a romantic reverence and tenderness. The name and unblemished character of his mother, who had been a good mother to him, having had "much patience with his obstinacy," he held in grateful affectionate recollection.

But Beethoven's early home, through the excesses of his father, was not a happy home to him, neither was the education which the boy received at a public school more than elementary instruction and a little Latin.

His father, who soon perceived the child's genius for music, set himself to conduct the little Ludwig's musical

studies, intending in the first place to profit by the exhibition of the boy's powers. But the youthful career which was so successful in Mozart's case became frustrated with regard to Beethoven, as much by the quick unmanageable temper of the son as by the irregular habits of the father. The boy Beethoven hated sitting still and receiving lessons, even in his beloved music, quite as much as the man Beethoven hated deliberately exhibiting his gift and giving lessons. Young Beethoven had to be driven to the piano and beaten before he would practise.

Beethoven's early instructors, besides his father, were a band-master named Pfeiffer, and, by the desire of the Archduke Maximilian, the two court organists, Van der Eder and Neefe. Beethoven had brothers, the elder of whom died in childhood, while the two younger lived to exercise a marked but not favourable influence upon the composer's fortunes and happiness. In his youth the greatest benefits which he received, and the best impressions which he imbibed of home life, were derived from a family named Von Breuning. Beethoven taught in this family, whose head overlooked his defects as a teacher on account of the fine qualities which were in the lad. He formed a firm friendship, honourable to all parties, with various members of this family, in which he learned, among other lessons, to make acquaintance with the highest German literature; and the friendship especially with a son, Stephen Breuning, in spite of a few misunderstandings, unavoidable where a man like Beethoven was concerned, continued unbroken to the end of his life. It early defied the fact that Beethoven and Stephen Breuning, as young men, were rivals for the love of a girl who frequently visited and resided in the Breuning family. This Mlle.

Jeannette d'Honrath, of Cologne, and who is described as fair, lively, amiable, fond of music, and with a fine voice, rejected the overtures of both the friends, and became the wife of a Major Greth, of Cologne. In the days of Beethoven's devotion, which one may be pardoned for imagining somewhat odd and uncouth, like his later expressions of feeling,* she would sing to him in derision the words of a well-known German song,—

> "What! part with thee this very day!
> My heart a thousand times says Nay,
> And yet I know I must not stay."

It is said with regard to Beethoven's early attainments that at eight years of age he could play, and play well, fugues of Sebastian Bach's, and that at ten years of age the boy had composed three sonatas, which formed remarkable evidence of his familiarity with the principles of music.† These sonatas and some other pieces were published in 1783, when Beethoven was thirteen years of age.

At the age of fifteen Beethoven was appointed, through the patronage of Count Waldstein, organist or assistant organist to the Electoral Chapel, with a salary which was a great boon in the poverty of the Beethoven family. Of the juvenile organist the performance of one of the rough

* "Beethoven was most awkward and helpless, and his every movement completely void of grace. He seldom laid his hand upon anything without breaking it: thus, he several times emptied the contents of the inkstand into the neighbouring piano; no piece of furniture was safe with him, and least of all a costly one,—he used either to upset, stain, or destroy it. How he ever managed to learn the art of shaving himself still remains a riddle, leaving the frequent cuts visible in his face quite out of the question. He never could learn to dance in time."—*Characteristics of Beethoven*, from WEGELER and REIS.

† "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

practical jokes, of which he continued fond in later years, is recorded. In the Passion-week, when the lamentations of the prophet Jeremiah were chanted in the chapel, the organist, in accordance with a boast which he had made, and a wager which he had taken to put out an eminent professional singer by an adroit modulation, "led the singer out of the prevailing mode into one having no affinity to it, still, however, adhering to the tonic of the former key, so that the singer, unable to find his way in this strange region, was brought to a dead stand." Although the singer had been a party to the wager, he was so mortified by his failure as to complain to the Elector of the conduct of the organist. But the Prince was more diverted than offended, and only exhorted the culprit not to play any more such clever tricks" (*Schindler*).

Beethoven visited Vienna, the great musical centre, for the first time in 1786-87, when he was between sixteen and seventeen years of age. He was introduced to Mozart, and exercised before him Beethoven's unequalled power of improvising, when Mozart exclaimed, "This youth will some day make a noise in the world."

Beethoven's return to Bonn is supposed to have been hastened by the illness of his mother, who died the same year, to the great grief of her son. Beethoven was then in embarrassed circumstances, and was indebted to the timely sympathy of old friends, one of them Ries, the violinist. When Ries's son brought Beethoven a letter of introduction many years afterwards, "Tell your father," said the composer, "that I remember the death of my mother." *

The next event in Beethoven's life is the return of Haydn

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

from England, when the electoral band gave him, at Godesborg, near Bonn, a breakfast, at which Beethoven was present, and laid before the elder man a cantata, which Haydn praised, advising Beethoven to persevere in his studies. In spite of this propitious beginning, the regard established was not destined to last; and from the first Mozart, and not Haydn, was the maestro whom Beethoven followed. Among Beethoven's compositions at this date was the music to a ballet performed by the nobility during the carnival—music which was at first attributed to Count Waldstein. Beethoven's variations on *Vievi Amore* followed. A well-known pianist of the day having doubted the ability of the young author to play his own work, Beethoven sat down to the piano, and not only played his own piece, but improvised on the same theme, after the light manner of the discomfited executant, Beethoven's own manner being hard and heavy.

About the year 1792, when Beethoven's father died, and Beethoven himself was twenty-two years of age, he received permission from the Elector Joseph II. to repair to Vienna and reside there, for the purpose of receiving lessons from Haydn, as Mozart was already dead a year.

According to Beethoven's biographer, though Mozart had died in his prime, his memory was still fresh in Vienna; indeed, we know from his life that, according to what is not an uncommon fate, the composer's works were doubly prized after death had set its seal on them. Ritter Gluck's spirit still hovered round the scene of his earlier triumphs. Father Haydn was still there in the body, living his genial life and pouring out his melodies; and young Beethoven, enthusiastic and strong-willed, said to himself, "Here will I stay, and not return to

Bonn, even though the Elector should cut off my pension."

One of the first of Beethoven's Viennese friends was the courtly physician, Von Swieten, at whose suggestion Haydn wrote the score of the *Creation*, and Mozart arranged the *Messiah*, &c., &c., of Handel, to be performed without an organ accompaniment. At the concerts at Von Swieten's house the works of Handel, and Sebastian Bach, together with the greatest masters of Italy, back to Palestrina, were performed with a full band. Naturally, Beethoven was a welcome guest at these concerts, to which, in addition to the delight and instruction that he received, he contributed to the gratification of the host, since, with "an insatiable appetite for music," the old gentleman would keep the young composer longer than the other guests, nay, make him stay the night when he was asked to wind up in giving half-a-dozen fugues of Bach's, "by way of a blessing." A note from Von Swieten, preserved by Beethoven, bids him come on Wednesday, at half-past eight in the evening, with his nightcap in his pocket.

Other good friends of Beethoven's were the brothers Von Lichnowsky, of whom Prince Karl had been Mozart's pupil, and had married the Countess Thun.

The Lichnowsky family, as well as Von Swieten, and in the end a no less faithful pupil and patron than the Archduke Rudolph, are said to have been genuinely and unremittingly generous and kind to Beethoven,* in spite

* Immediately on Beethoven's arrival in Vienna, Prince Lichnowsky settled on the young composer a yearly allowance of six hundred florins, "which he was to receive till he could obtain permanent employment," thus putting Beethoven above the straits of poverty.

of the trials to which he put their good-will, especially when the composer stood to his aristocratic and princely friends in the relation of master and pupils.

I have already spoken of Beethoven's reluctance to teach, which he took no pains to overcome, behaving in the character of instructor, as he said himself, "like an ill-tempered donkey;" often composing while his pupils played, and very rarely seating himself, and remaining by them for half-an-hour at a time, while he would excuse himself on any plea from attendance on them rather than be at the trouble of dressing in order to give his lessons. In the first of the three periods into which Herr Schindler has divided Beethoven's professional life, the composer soon put an end to his position as a pupil of Haydn's, being persuaded that he (Beethoven) had discovered that Haydn was careless and inaccurate in correcting his pupil's mistakes, and feeling offended with some advice which Haydn had given with regard to the publication of early works of Beethoven's. Afterwards, Beethoven was wont to say that "he had indeed taken lessons of Haydn, but never learnt anything of him." The breach was further widened by Beethoven's refusing to put after his name on his published work "pupil of Joseph Haydn." Prior to the end of the quarrel, Beethoven had dedicated three sonatas to Haydn.

Beethoven's next teacher was Albrechtsberger, of whom Mozart had thought as his successor in the Church of St. Stephan, and spoken with high praise on his death-bed. With him Beethoven went through a thorough study of counterpoint, becoming learned and profound, though, it is generally alleged, inclined to be stiff and formal in this division of musical science. Another of

Beethoven's teachers at this time, in dramatic composition, was Salieri. One day in later years, when Moscheles called for the Hof Kapell-Meister Salieri, and found him from home, Moscheles saw on his table a sheet of paper on which was written, in the large, bold characters of Beethoven, "The pupil Beethoven has been here."—(*Life of Moscheles.*)

Beethoven had early adopted the course of life which he followed with little intermission to the last. He lived in lodgings in the city of Vienna for the winter; during the spring and summer he took up his residence in the suburbs or in the neighbouring country villages. He was perpetually changing his lodgings on the smallest provocation. The circumstance that his landlord—a gentleman of Beethoven's acquaintance who had given the composer the use of a country house—met him in his walks and affronted him by too profound obeisances, was enough in one instance to cause Beethoven to make a sudden change of quarters. On another occasion, he departed with precipitation because a crowd gazed at him from a bridge. More reasonable objections, which he was apt to insist upon, were the small allowance of sun which some of the lodgings could claim, or the inferior quality of water they could afford. The removals were made in the face of every inconvenience, not the least of which was the drain on Beethoven's purse when he forsook, at a moment's notice, a lodging taken and paid for.

Beethoven's habits, bodily and mental, continued much the same throughout his life. In winter as well as summer he rose at daybreak, and wrote till his dinner-hour of two or three o'clock; but his writing was interspersed with sudden walks of from half an hour to an hour's duration,

when he would bring back fresh ideas from the open garden and fields. These habits he practised in all states of the weather, and in summer he was sometimes as embrowned as any day-labourer. After dinner his usual walk when in town was to run in double-quick time, "as if hunted by bailiffs, twice round the town," "whether it rained, or snowed, or hailed, or the thermometer stood an inch or two below freezing-point; whether Boreas blew a chilling blast from the Bohemian mountains, or whether the thunder roared and the forked lightning played." It was then that he was believed to construct and reconstruct his work. When he did not walk out, his devotion to his bath led him to resort to cold-water ablutions for inspiration. He would abstractedly pour several jugs full of water over his hands into the washhand basin, "all the while humming and roaring, for sing he could not;" after dabbling till he was wet through and through, he would pace up and down his room with a vacant expression and his eyes "frightfully distended," seat himself at his table and write, and "get up to the washhand basin and dabble and hum again." Beethoven was fond of improvising, in the dusk of the evening, on the piano and the violin, or the viola, which always lay ready to his hand on the piano. Latterly his playing became painful to hear, when "he would lay his left hand flat upon the key-board, and thus drown in discordant noise the music to which his right hand was feelingly giving utterance." "Before he began to play in earnest, Beethoven used sportively to strike the keys with the palm of his hand, draw his fingers along the key-board from one end to the other, and play all manner of gambols, at which he laughed heartily."—(*Seyfried.*)

Beethoven's first and only professional tour was made

when he was a young man, and included visits to Leipsic and Berlin, where he played before the Prussian court. His playing, which became afterwards so fatally affected by his physical infirmity of deafness, was at this time at its best, and had a wonderful power over an audience. It was somewhat hard and heavy, deficient in delicacy and sometimes even in accuracy, but full of expression, of fire, and of superb, highly wrought art.—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*) He had an intense dislike to a staccato style of playing, calling it, in derision, "finger-dancing." He considered that the hands, in pianoforte playing, should not be raised above the keys more than is necessary, and that they would thus be enabled to "generate tone" or "make the instrument sing."

It is difficult to chronicle the date of Beethoven's works, as they were not published according to the order of their composition, many of them being retained for the severe correction and perpetual improvements in which Beethoven indulged. We are warned, too, to remark, that although Beethoven's course was more progressive than that of any other composer, it was rather a progress in style than in excellence, and that while critics have divided his work into three styles, corresponding with the three parts which his biographer has chosen to make of Beethoven's life, the divisions do not by any means imply degrees of merit or even of earnestness and severity of work, since some of Beethoven's early compositions are among his best, while some of his latest are among the lightest and most trifling productions to which he ever condescended.

In composition, Beethoven used a sketch-book, in which he set down ideas and the different phrases into which they were capable of being wrought. As a rule, he was slow in

composition, and was known to have written three scores on one theme before he was pleased with the result. He would sometimes have several compositions at different stages of development at the same time.

But Beethoven would put off to the last moment the execution of commissions given him to be completed within a certain time, and then he would compose on the spur of the moment, as he improvised. Occasionally such rapid composition was a whim.

To the first period of his life belong, among other masterpieces, his "Sonata in E Flat, op. 7," "Quintett in E Flat," and "Symphony in D." Already his commissions were more than he could execute, though they were not paid at the rate of later years, his earlier symphonies, sonatas, and concertos having been sold in copyright for not more than ten or five louis-d'ors.

Two incidents belong to this portion of Beethoven's career: the first is illustrative of the man's impatient pride, while the second shows the high cultivation which musical science had attained in Vienna, and the effect of this cultivation on the composer. One of Beethoven's many aristocratic patronesses invited him to meet Prince Louis Ferdinand, of Berlin, perhaps the greatest musical amateur of the day. (Beethoven's opinion of Prince Louis Ferdinand's playing, which the composer, looking upon the opinion in the light of a high compliment, as no doubt it was, expressed to the prince, was that he did not consider Prince Louis Ferdinand "anything like a royal, princely performer, but a famous pianoforte player.") The lady's sense of etiquette prevented her from placing the prince and the composer at the same supper-table, and Beethoven, who had a very

different temper from the contented Kammer Musikus, Joseph Haydn, and whose democratic spirit took the suspicious form of extreme soreness to social distinctions, instead of proving itself above them by indifference or even quiet approval, on being necessarily excluded from the table of the nobility, quitted the house in dudgeon. Afterwards the prince strove to be a peacemaker between the lady and her angry guest, by inviting both to a dinner of his own, and setting the composer on his right hand and the countess on his left.

The second incident, or rather institution, of the time, was a famous quartett party which was wont to be held at the residence of the Russian Ambassador, Count Rasumowsky. Beethoven took a lively interest in the finished performances of this set of musicians, and wrote for them his series of quartetts.

Undeniably Beethoven, in his younger days, was petted in aristocratic Viennese circles, and his pronounced democratic opinions and bearishness of behaviour seem only to have added a racy charm to his other attractions. These did not include personal beauty, as in the case of Mozart. Beethoven was a little, square, spare man, with rough hair, generally in wild disorder, small eyes, half sunken in his head, though capable of becoming distended, and of flashing brilliantly when he was excited; and his dress, while he was personally clean, was slovenly and negligent in the extreme. Still Beethoven, with his genius and his oddity, did not fail to be a favourite with the young countesses and baronesses, in whose musical circles were found his princely patrons, and to the charms of these ladies, the composer, according to his biographer, was keenly though not, unless in one case, lastingly alive.

Herr Schindler regrets that in a state of society, with noble birth and wealth on the one hand, and plebeian genius and poverty on the other, there was an almost unsurmountable barrier which there is no rumour of Beethoven's even—except in a single instance—attempting to break down, against any of his attachments, as vehement as they were high-flown, ripening into the fulness and peace of a happy marriage. Herr Schindler laments for Beethoven the absence of a wife like Constanze Mozart (even like Constanze!) who might have said to the wayward, morbidly sensitive man what Mozart's wife is described as "venturing" on saying to him, "in a tone of kindness, 'stay at home and work: such and such a one is waiting for what you promised.'" Certainly Mozart's history shows no need on his part of an incitement to work in, the fever of which consumed him; and how it might have fared with the morbid irritability and stubborn impracticability of a man like Ludwig van Beethoven had a weak, exacting woman, like Stanzerl, hung upon him and goaded his efforts, we are simply left to conjecture.

It does not seem, in reading his life, that Beethoven was well constituted for being the head of a family, even with a wise and generous woman for his helpmeet, or that he missed much individual happiness in not marrying, in spite of those sentences in his handwriting in which he expresses his dissatisfaction and his aspirations, "love, and love alone, is capable of giving thee a happier life. O God, let me at length find her—her, who may strengthen me in virtue—who may lawfully be mine!" and in spite of those few passionate extravagant letters which are preserved of his correspondence with the Countess Giulietta Guiccardi, to whom, according to tradition, Beethoven

actually made a proposal of marriage; for his correspondence with the famous Bettina von Arnum, the child-mistress of Goethe, was but idle, gallant by-play, hardly worthy of the man.

Notwithstanding the deep, pathetic enamourment that rings through some of Beethoven's music, especially through what is called in Austria the "Moonlight Sonata," which is dedicated to the Countess Giulietta Guiccardi, and the song "Adeläide," his real relations with women appear to have been either those of the most transcendental and transitory flights, when he drew inspiration from making love to a half-imaginary being at a safe distance, or of the most prosaic, humdrum, and somewhat selfish friendship, the last having the virtue, which the first lacked, of constancy.

His biographer, while insisting on the lasting nature of Beethoven's regard for the Countess Giulietta, who had early chosen another husband, gives as the proof that Beethoven inquired after her, and heard with interest news concerning her, to the close of his life. M. Ries, in opposition to M. Schindler, declares that on rallying Beethoven on one of his violent but brief attachments, the composer admitted that it was of longer duration than any which had gone before it, having lasted "full seven months." Mr. Haweis, after referring to this and other stories, has this concluding version of Beethoven's associations with women—"The ladies might knit him comforters, make him light puddings; he would even condescend to lie on their sofas after dinner, and pick his teeth with the snuffers while they played his sonatas." (Beethoven's great reward to his friends was the gift of a sonata or a symphony, or still oftener the dedication, or

even the promise of a dedication—for he dealt largely in such promises, which he forgot or was not able, from contending claims, to fulfil—of one of his pieces.)

I cannot resist quoting as appropriate to this judgment a passage from one of the well-known writers of the day in reference to music or poetry supposed to have been inspired by one woman. My author makes his character say, "Do you think, madam, any fine songs like that, or any fine words that go to the heart of people, are written about one person? Oh, no! The man has a great desire in him to say something beautiful or sad, and he says it—not to one person, but to all the world, and all the world takes it from him as a gift. Sometimes, yes, he will think of one woman, or he will dedicate the music to her, or he will compose it for her wedding, but the feeling in his heart is greater than any that he has for her. Can you believe, madame, that Mendelssohn wrote the *Hochzeiten*—the 'Wedding March'—for any one wedding? No. It was all the marriage joy of all the world he put into his music, and every one knows that. And you hear it at this wedding, at that wedding, but you know it belongs to something far away and more beautiful than the marriage of any one bride with her sweetheart."—(*A Princess of Thule.*)

In any estimate of Beethoven's peculiarities, whether in youth or in age, it would be altogether unjust to leave out the terrible test of his crowning calamity which began to beset him so early as 1800. Beethoven was then but thirty years of age, when he confided to a friend his sense of the approach, and his dread of the final conquest of that deafness which was the worst misfortune that could befall a musician. To a man constituted like Beethoven

the deafness which so soon made him lose half what was said in conversation, and bend his head close to the performers to catch the different notes of the orchestra, was a double torment. His haughty temper could not brook the humiliation of such an infirmity: the great work and joy of his life were threatened with an impediment which might not stop short of annihilation, so that he apprehended professional defeat and ruin: all that was harsh, jealous, and turbulent in the man rose up in revolt against the sentence. Through the desperation and despair of the situation he preserved his mournfully vague faith in God and goodness:* no doubt, that, and his love of music, with his deep manly desire to do his part in art, saved him, as he himself declares, from laying violent hands on his life. But his trials, which were without any Christian consolation, left Beethoven a man morose in the midst of his strong sense of humour, distrustful of his best friends, always in excess either of love or hatred, and a petulant slave to his merest whims and fancies.

The second part of Beethoven's life dates from 1800, when he was thirty years of age, and when his deafness was only a horrible evil dimly anticipated but still hovering in the background. Beethoven's oratorio of *The Mount of Olives*, in which he himself lived to condemn the treatment of the part of the Lord as too dramatic, and which strikes

* There were only two topics which Beethoven never touched upon, and which he carefully avoided, namely, thorough bass and religion; both, he declared, were exhausted, "which admitted of no further discussion." The following inscriptions, said to be from a temple of Isis, were framed, and lay for many years on Beethoven's writing-table:—"I am that which is, I am all that is, all that was, and all that shall be: no mortal man hath my veil uplifted;" "He is óne, self-existent; and to that one, all things owe their existence."

coldly even on his ardent admirers, as the work of a free-thinker and simple Deist in religion, was written at this time, and at least portions of it and of his next great work were composed by Beethoven when seated between the two stems of an oak "in the thickest part of the wood in the parks of Schönbrunn," near the village of Hetzendorf, where he was living in great seclusion.*

His younger brothers Carl or Caspar and Johann van Beethoven, the one a musician, the other a druggist, who had followed Ludwig van Beethoven to Vienna, are described as beginning from this period to exercise their pernicious influence over him. He had little in common with these brothers; he saw through their covetousness and jealousy; his intercourse with them seems partly a passionate appeal against their unjust judgment and officious interference in his affairs, and partly a wrangling resistance to such interloping attempts—a resistance which on one occasion was so rough that the brothers exchanged blows. —(*Schindler.*) Yet Beethoven allowed these two kinsmen, younger than him in years, infinitely beneath him in nature, to whom he owed no obligation—nay, he declared with bitterness that they grudged him the least favour, and set him against his best friends,—to warp his mind with the meanest suspicions, and harass his excitable temper to the verge of madness. What shall we say to such miserable subjection but that it belonged to the Titanic, yet chaotic, utterly unregulated nature of the man, who could not resist his own lightest impulse when it took possession of him, who owned no law save what he framed for himself and such as he incorporated in the noble but heathen and halting apothegm over his writing-table. Beethoven's very virtues,

* "Life of Beethoven."

his natural unworldliness and disinterestedness, rendered him doubly the prey of his far more practical, possibly shrewder, and at the same time unspeakably meaner-minded brothers.

About 1801 Beethoven's infirmity was driving him from society, in which conversation had become a difficulty to him, and in which he detested more than ever to play those harmonies that were so precious and sacred to him, and which he was fast losing the power of expressing save by writing—for his fine playing in those years when his loss of hearing was increasing, but had not reached its climax, became always louder, harsher, more string-rending and ear-splitting, until at length it passed into a wild, crashing discord. At the country residence of a patron where Beethoven was visiting he was pressed importunately to play, and when he continued to refuse, a jesting threat, in equally bad taste, was uttered, that the composer should be confined a prisoner to the house, if he did not choose to contribute to the pleasure of the company. So enraged was Beethoven at this treatment that he left the house, "night-time as it was," walked upwards of three miles to the next town, travelled post to Vienna, and revenged himself characteristically by taking the bust of his late entertainer from the top of Beethoven's bookcase where it had stood, and dashing it in fragments on the floor.

At the same time he was very indignant with any inattention to his playing. M. Ries mentions an occasion when he was playing along with the composer his three marches for two performers, and two of the audience chose to carry on a loud and merry conversation. Beethoven made indignant efforts to silence them, and when these failed he suddenly lifted his companion's hands from the

keys, jumped up, and saying loudly, "I do not play for such swine," turned away and walked off, and would not be persuaded to return to the piano.

Beethoven was also jealous of any liberty taken with his playing and his pieces by his friends. When he had composed the grand Andante in F major three-eight time, he was persuaded to play it over twice to his pupil Ries and a friend. Ries, on his return home that day, paid a visit to Prince Lichnowsky, and sitting down to the piano gave him an example of what he remembered of Beethoven's last composition. The prince, filled with admiration, in his turn picked up a portion of the measure; and thinking to surprise Beethoven, the next time the composer visited the prince, the latter sat down to the piano, and saying, "I, too, have composed something which is not bad." Beethoven declared he would not hear it, when Prince Lichnowsky amazed the rebellious listener by playing Beethoven's own lately conceived and cherished Andante. In place of taking the affair as a jesting compliment, Beethoven was furious with Ries, and vowed that he would never again play before him, keeping the vów doggedly for some time in spite of the regret and even the wrath of the prince—to the extent of compelling Ries to withdraw, with tears in his eyes, from the first private performance of Beethoven's opera. Yet Beethoven had for his old friend's son a real regard, of which Ries, after quoting Beethoven's generosity to him in money matters, gives the following comical instance. On Ries's return from Silesia he went to his old master, whom he found in the act of shaving, soaped up to the very eyes, to which his excessively strong beard extended. On perceiving his favourite pupil, Beethoven started up and embraced him with so much cordiality

that he effectually transferred every particle of the soapy substance from Beethoven's left cheek to Ries's right, to the great laughter of both.

The Countess Giulietta Guiccardi, who, with the Countess Marie Erdödy, stands prominently forward in the list of the fair, musical, high-born ladies to whom Beethoven paid homage, had the power to win him back, but only for a time, into the circles which she adorned, from the phantom-haunted, misanthropic solitude in which he was fain to take refuge.

In 1802, a violent illness threatened Beethoven's life. On his recovery he went to the village of Heiligenstadt, seven miles from Vienna, and there he wrote the strange but quite characteristic will, addressed to his brothers, which Mr. Haweis quotes in defence of Beethoven's really noble nature, with all its defects and distortions. The whole will, indeed, is a vehement defence of himself in his eccentricities and errors, and a cry to be better understood, more tenderly dealt with, and more freely forgiven by his brother-man and by his God. Thus he wrote—

"Oh, ye who consider or declare me to be hostile, obstinate, or misanthropic, what injustice ye do me! Ye know not the secret causes of that which to you wears such an appearance. . . . But only consider that, for the last six years, I have been attacked by an incurable complaint, aggravated by the unskilful treatment of medical men, disappointed from year to year in the hope of relief, and at last obliged to submit to the endurance of an evil, the cure of which may last perhaps for years, if it is practicable at all. Born with a lively, ardent disposition, susceptible to the diversions of society, I was forced at an early age to renounce them, and to pass my life in seclusion. If I

strove at any time to set myself above this, O how cruelly was I driven back by the doubly painful experience of my defective hearing! And yet it was not possible for me to say to people, 'Speak louder, bawl, for I am deaf!' Ah, how could I proclaim the defect of a sense that I once possessed in the highest perfection—in a perfection in which few of my colleagues possess or ever did possess it! Indeed, I cannot. . . . O God, thou lookest down upon my misery; thou knowest that it is accompanied with love of my fellow-creatures and a disposition to do good! O men, when ye shall read this, think that ye have wronged me: and let the child of affliction take comfort in finding one like himself, who, in spite of all impediments of nature, yet did all that lay in his power to obtain admittance into the rank of worthy artists and men. . . . O Providence, grant that a day of pure joy may once break for me! How long have I been a stranger to the delightful sound of real joy! When, O God, when can I again feel it in the temple of nature and of men? Never? Nay, that would be too hard!"—(*Schindler.*)

In 1802, it is said at the suggestion of General Bernadotte, Beethoven commemorated his own republican principles, and his admiration of the man who was then the great republican leader, by a work which was to be dedicated to, as, in fact, it was composed in honour of, Napoleon Bonaparte. But before Beethoven had finished to his mind the grand symphony which had occupied him a year, the general and first consul was crowned emperor. At the tidings the disgusted composer tore the title-page, which bore at the head "Bonaparte," at the foot "Ludwig van Beethoven," from his new work, and flung the work itself, "with a torrent of execrations against the new French

emperor, upon the floor, from which he would not allow it to be lifted." Eventually the work was picked up, re-baptized, and came before the world as the expression of an abstract sentiment, under the title of the *Sinfonia Eroica*.

From 1803 to 1805, Beethoven was occupied with his single great opera, the name of which he had also to alter. It was known first as *Leonore*, was in three acts, and was represented in troublous war times when the audience was largely composed of French officers, for it was just seven days after the entrance of Napoleon's troops into Vienna. From the unpropitious date of its representation, and from jealousies among the performers, especially the singers, whom Beethoven would neither consult nor propitiate, though much depended on their good will, the opera now so prized did not meet with favour, and was withdrawn after the third performance. Beethoven wrote no fewer than four overtures, laying aside one and substituting another as difficulties were made or objections instituted. Indeed, moody and violent as the composer grew, he did not refuse to listen to the musical advice of his friends, especially of the princely brothers Lichnowsky, and he is declared to have been always more attentive to the censure than to the praise of his critics.

Among friends who were more his equals in birth, and who stood steadfastly by his interests, bearing much contradiction in his service, all through his life, Beethoven numbered two endeared to him from old associations. The one was his early friend, Stephen von Breuning, who pulled Beethoven through "the intrigues and cabals" of the theatrical managers and singers opposed to his opera. The other was Ferdinand Ries, son of Franz Ries, who

had become Beethoven's pupil, and remained his devoted adherent.

Leonore was produced a second time in Vienna, with changes in the libretto, the following year (1806); but though much better received by the audience, yet, in consequence of the continual strife between the composer and the performers, it was again withdrawn after the third representation. But, as a critic takes leave to observe, "non-success at first" is not treated as "total failure" in Vienna, after the fashion of musical judgment in England, so that the hardly treated opera had yet a great future before it. In 1807, principally through the exertions of Prince Lichnowsky, *Leonore* was reduced to two acts, and brought out under its second name of *Fidelio*, when it achieved a great success in some degree commensurate with its merit. About this time Beethoven composed his "Symphony in B flat," described as an "epitome of happy love in many phases of its enthusiasm," his magnificent "Symphony in C minor," and what has been named a "musical idyl," and is always quoted in proof of Beethoven's love of the country—the "Sinfonia Pastorale."

In 1809, Beethoven was offered the appointment of Kapell-Meister to Jerome Bonaparte, King of Westphalia, with a salary of six hundred ducats. His biographer distinctly states that this was the first and the last—on account of Beethoven's deficient hearing—offer of a secure provision which was made to the composer during his life; and at this time he was nearly forty years of age, and might well be supposed desirous of a certain income for the future. He was prevented from accepting this appointment by the determination of his Austrian patrons to retain Beethoven's musical genius for their country. Three of

these patrons—the Archduke Rudolph, Prince Kinsky, and Prince Lobkowitz—entered into an agreement to provide Beethoven with an annuity of four thousand florins in paper money so long as he should not have any permanent appointment, and on the single condition that he should not quit Austria.—(*Schindler.*)

In the same year (1809) Vienna suffered a short bombardment from the French, when, according to M. Ries, Beethoven's nervous organization was severely affected; he spent the most of his time in a cellar belonging to his brother Caspar's house, and even covered his head with pillows to prevent the sound of the cannon reaching his deaf ears. According to M. Schindler, Beethoven might have quitted Vienna before the bombardment had he so chosen, and he was the last man in the city to suffer from personal fear.

In 1810, Beethoven brought out his first mass at the summer residence of Prince Esterhazy, and on this occasion a mere jest on the lips of the prince, with a laugh on the face of a fellow-musician, caused a bitter misunderstanding on Beethoven's part which cost him grievous spleen, and the loss of all intercourse with his brother-artist, till a reconciliation was effected within a few days of the death of Beethoven. This mass was distinguished by the poetical treatment given to it, the perfection of its technical details, and its "isolated passages of consummate beauty." Many years afterwards (in 1823) the mass was brought to Beethoven with a noble German text. In reading it the tears trickled down the composer's cheeks. "Yes, that was precisely my feeling when I wrote this," he said as he read. "This was the first and the last time I saw him in tears," adds M. Schindler.

In 1810, when Beethoven was forty years of age, he made the acquaintance of Bettina von Arnim, who even in her girlhood was the type of a clever, high-flown, vain, and egotistical German woman. Bettina herself in her letters gives a glowing and exaggerated description of her introduction and interview with the composer, and of his confiding to her his views on art. With regard to the last, even she admits that on reading over her version of their conversation to Beethoven he exclaimed, "And did I indeed say all this? Then I must certainly have had a *raptus!*" What Madame Bettina stated consisted of such sentences as these—"When I lift up mine eyes I must sigh, for that which I behold is against my creed; and I must despise the world, because it knows not that music is a higher revelation than science or philosophy. Music is like wine, inflaming men's minds to new achievements, and I am the Bacchus serving it out to them, even unto intoxication. When they are sobered down again, they shall find themselves possessed of a spiritual draught such as shall remain with them even on dry land. I have no friend. I must live all to myself; yet I know that God is nearer to me than to my brothers in the art. I hold converse with Him, and fear not, for I have always known and understood Him. Nor do I fear for my works; no evil can befall them; and whosoever shall understand them, he shall be freed from all such misery as burthens mankind." All this she declared was spoken to her the first time that he saw her, when even she confessed that his "unbounded frankness" to her, who must have been wholly insignificant to him, struck her as in marked contrast to what she had heard of his reserve. She does not add that he was a man ordinarily plain, short and gruff of speech, and that to

simplicity, brevity, and bluntness he added a grotesque whimsicality rather than a tendency to tall talk. The following curious origin is attributed to the last peculiarity. Beethoven sought in reading the light periodical literature of the day the relaxation which others found in conversation, and his natural fund of drollery, which no misfortunes or despondency could altogether extinguish, led him to dwell on and adopt absurd facetious expressions, the very oddness of which attracted him, while at the same time he was unaware from his infirmity that they were not to be heard in ordinary speech.—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*) With regard to Bettina von Arnim and Beethoven, it is but fair to add that M. Moscheles has pointed out that Beethoven's correspondence with Bettina von Arnim, in which he addresses her as "My dear beloved Bettina," "Dearest good Bettina," and concludes in one instance, "Good Heaven! how I love you!—your truest friend and deaf brother, Beethoven," so far bears out this extraordinary effusiveness, and that the fact of the enforced silence in which Beethoven lived, may also account for a sudden demonstration when he fancied he had found a congenial soul.

The more rational narrative of the youthful female friend of two such giants as Goethe and Beethoven contains many interesting particulars:—"He has three sets of apartments in which he alternately secretes himself—one in the country, one in the town, and a third on the ramparts." She writes of Beethoven to Goethe—"It was there I found him on the third floor. I entered unannounced: he was seated at the piano. I gave him my name: he was most friendly, and asked me if I would hear a song which he had just been composing, and sang with a shrill and

piercing voice that made the hearer thrill with wofulness, 'Kennst du das Land?' . . . . He accompanied me home, and it was during our walk that he said all those fine things on art—talking so loud all the while, and standing still so often, that it required some courage to listen to him in the street. . . . . They were all not a little surprised at home on seeing me enter the room with him in the midst of a large dinner-party. After dinner he sat down to the instrument, and played, unasked, wonderfully and at great length. His pride and his genius were working that out together, which to any mind but his would have been inconceivable, to any fingers but his impossible of execution. He comes daily ever since; if not, I go to him, and thus I miss all sorts of gaieties, theatres, picture-galleries, and even the mounting of St. Stephan's Church steeple. Beethoven says, 'Never mind seeing these things; I shall call for you, and towards evening we shall walk together in the Schönbrunn Avenues. . . . . He took me to a grand rehearsal with full opera. There I sat quite alone in a box in the vast un-lit space; single gleams of light stole through crevices and knot-holes in the walls, dancing like a stream of glittering sparks. There I saw this great genius exercise his sovereignty. O Goethe! no emperor or king feels so entirely his power, and that all might proceeds from himself, as this Beethoven, who but just now in the garden was at a loss to find from whom it *did* come. He stood there with such firm decision; his gestures, his countenance, expressed the completion of his creation; he prevented every error, every misconception—not a breath but was under command—all were set in the most sedulous activity by the majestic presence of his mind." (Bettina von Arnim's enthusiasm or her

ignorance must have misled her in this judgment. According to M. Schindler, Beethoven's impatient temper prevented him in the beginning from being the best conductor of an orchestra, which his violent, incessant gesticulation distracted and confused; while after his deafness had disqualified him still further, the act of leading was rendered positively distressing by those efforts to hear on the part of the leader, which compelled him to follow and not to lead, and put out instead of stimulating the performers.) Seyfried thus describes a peculiarity of Beethoven's manner when acting as conductor:—"A diminuendo he was in the habit of making by contracting his person, making himself smaller and smaller; and when a pianissimo occurred, he seemed to shrink, if the word is allowed, beneath the conductor's desk; as the sounds increased in loudness, so did he gradually rise up as if out of an abyss; and when the full force of the united instruments broke upon the ear, raising himself on tiptoe, he looked of gigantic stature, and with both his arms floating about in undulating motion seemed as if he would soar to the clouds."

Through the instrumentality of Bettina von Arnim, Beethoven made a valuable friend, who afterwards helped him in need, in M. Brentane, of the banking-house in Frankfort.

In 1811 a change in the Austrian finance paper reduced Beethoven's annuity to one-fifth of the original amount. He endeavoured to induce his patrons, whose incomes were probably affected, though not in the same degree, by the alteration, to make the loss good, or withdraw their stipulation, in vain.

In 1812, again by means of Bettina von Arnim, Beet-

hoven met Goethe at Toplitz in Bohémia, and the poet and the composer had some friendly intercourse together. But when Beethoven wrote to Goethe thirteen years afterwards, and even humbly besought a favour, to grant which would not have inconvenienced the donor, while it would have signally benefited the receiver, Goethe, in the deeply rooted and terrible selfishness which belonged to the man, did not so much as acknowledge the letter. The request was that Goethe might recommend Beethoven's great Mass in D, which was for sale to the European courts, to the Grand Duke of Saxe Weimar.

Of the brief intercourse at Toplitz, Beethoven writes in a letter to their common friend, Bettina von Arnim, when he illustrates the two men's different political sentiments to the great advantage of his own republicanism:—"Kings and princes can, to be sure, make professors, privy councillors, &c., and confer titles and orders; but they cannot make great men—minds which rise above the common herd; these they must not pretend to make, and therefore they must be held in honour. When two men such as Goethe and I come together, even the high and mighty perceive what is to be considered as great in men like us. Yesterday, on our way home, we met the whole imperial family. We saw them coming from a distance, and Goethe separated from me to stand aside; say what I would, I could not make him advance another step. I pressed my hat down upon my head, buttoned up my great-coat, and walked with folded arms through the thickest of the throng. Princes and pages formed a line, the Archduke Rudolph took off his hat, and the Empress made the first salutation. Those gentry know me. I saw to my real amusement the procession file past Goethe. He

stood aside, with his hat off, and bending lowly. I rallied him smartly for it."

I may give here Goethe's opinion, as expressed to Mendelssohn, of Beethoven's "Symphony in C minor." Goethe said at first, "it is grandiose;" but after a long pause he added, "It is very grand, very wild; it makes one feel that the house is about to fall down; and what must it be when played by a number of men together!"

M. Schindler tells us that Madame Striecher, a kind, motherly woman, the wife of a man who had been a friend of the composer's from their youth, found Beethoven, who had been earning considerable sums of money, and in company with his brother Carl—then professing to manage the elder brother's affairs—squandering them, going on without saving money, or even deriving comfort from what was spent, in the most deplorable state where his housekeeping and wardrobe were concerned. In spite of Beethoven's perpetual removals, which had made him a marked man, not to be received, if possible, by the lodging-house keepers of Vienna, he had failed to find an establishment where he could secure privacy, respect, and well-cooked meals; he had "not a decent coat, nor a whole shirt." Madame Striecher effected some improvement in the dreary chaos of disorder and dilapidation, and induced Beethoven to try to practise economy. With a view to comfort and economy, this friend got Beethoven to hire a man-servant, who was a tailor and had a wife, though the latter did not reside in the same house with her husband and his master, and the experiment was so far successful that these two are the only examples of the many servants who were with Beethoven in succession, of whom we hear that they served him faithfully.

During this epoch of comparative tranquillity, when the tailor-servant sat stitching the master's clothes within call in the ante-room, Beethoven composed his "Symphony in A major," his cantata "The Glorious Moment," and his "Battle Symphony," his music to Goethe's "Egmont," his music to Kotzebue's masque "Ruins of Athens," and his "King Stephen," a work of a similar description. Of the "Symphony in A major" it has been written, that "its wild romance, its passionate yearning, its extravagant gaiety, and all its novelties of means and purpose may be regarded as one of the first products of that stage in the development of Beethoven's genius, classed by critics as his third style.* "The Glorious Moment," or "Der Glorreiche Augenblick," known afterwards with a different text in England as "Der Preis der Tonkunst," or the "Praise of Harmony," was written in order to celebrate the meeting of the allied sovereigns in Vienna in 1814. Although it had the usual fate of works written to order, in being decidedly inferior to Beethoven's spontaneous productions, it was perhaps the best paid of his works, and was connected with social triumphs which the stout republican was not stout enough to disdain. In addition to the gift of a large sum of money, Beethoven received a presentation of the citizenship of Vienna, amidst the gracious notice of the crowned heads and the concourse of great men in the sovereigns' wake—a tribute which the composer always remembered fondly. He was presented to many illustrious persons; among them the Empress of Russia, in the apartments of his pupil, the Archduke Rudolph.

The "Battle Symphony" had a stranger origin, and a

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

fate as unpropitious for its composer as that of the "Glorious Moment" had been favourable. A celebrated mechanist, named Mälzel, in Vienna, believed that he could contrive an invention in acoustics, which would confer on Beethoven the priceless boon of the restoration, or at least partial restoration, of his hearing, which had become at last so impaired that he could only communicate with his friends by means of writing. In gratitude for this supposed service, Beethoven expended his genius, learning, and skill in composing, at Mälzel's instigation, and even under his directions and in his behalf, a symphony which should suit a very complete barrel-organ named the panharmonium, that the mechanist had invented, and which, with alterations supplied also by the composer, might be played by an orchestra. This curious, elaborate mechanical composition was as unsatisfactory in the sequel of its history as it was in the light of a work of Beethoven's, with the single exception that it was first played gratuitously by an orchestra in which the performers were the most distinguished musicians in Germany, including Meyerbeer, Moscheles, Spohr, &c., &c., for the benefit of the Austrian and Bavarian soldiers wounded at Hanau.

Mälzel's invention did not relieve Beethoven's infirmity; and when the composer, conceiving that he had been duped, refused the mechanist the promised score, Mälzel procured, surreptitiously, an imperfect copy, and had the symphony performed for his own benefit. To complete the list of misfortunes of which the "Battle Symphony" was the centre, Beethoven dedicated it to our George, Prince Regent, who, to the composer's extreme mortification, took no notice of the compliment. About

the same time, Beethoven sold to the Philharmonic Society, London, the right of performance, until publication, of a cluster of works, including the overtures of the "Ruins of Athens" and "King Stephen." But the society, regarding them as beneath the merits of the composer and the standard of the society's performances, would not produce them publicly. In this failure there is no reflection on the good faith of Beethoven in the sale, further than that he shared with many composers and authors, an incompetency to pronounce on the comparative merits of his own work.

Beethoven had an English pianoforte made for him by the Messrs. Broadwood, and presented to the composer by Ferdinand John Cramer and Sir George Smart. This piano Beethoven constantly carried about with him.

In 1815, on the death of Carl or Casmar van Beethoven, Ludwig van Beethoven was left guardian of Carl's son, a boy of eight years of age. The underlying tenderness of Beethoven's gruff and violent nature had caused him always to yearn for domestic ties, though he had derived little benefit or happiness from any he had possessed, unless it might be in the case of his mother. He adopted eagerly the charge of his nephew, and proposed to himself in all sincerity the part of a devoted parent, who should be rewarded by the filial reverence and regard of his son.

But Beethoven's method of fulfilling a father's duties erred from the first in a discordant mixture of unlimited indulgence and despotic authority. That temperance in all things, under whatever obligations, or with whatever intentions, and that justice which are among the best attributes of the paternal character, were not in Beethoven's

nature, and his assuming the part of a father boded ill for his own and another's welfare. The earlier consequences of Beethoven's guardianship proved vexatious in a costly lawsuit into which he was dragged in order to vindicate his claims as guardian against those of the mother of the child, and the painful necessity which was laid upon him, in the course of the lawsuit, to declare and establish publicly the abandoned character of the widow of his late brother. In this very commencement of the connection, too, germs of distrust and deceit were established between the uncle and the handsome, clever little nephew, from whom the lonely, brooding elderly man hoped so much, by the extreme measure which Beethoven adopted of forbidding the least intercourse between mother and child.

Another difficulty of Beethoven's life at this time, was the ruin of Prince Lobkowitz, through becoming lessee of the Imperial Court Theatre, and the loss, in the crash, of that portion of Beethoven's already abridged annuity which he had derived from the prince. Not very long afterwards, another of Beethoven's patrons, Prince Kinsky, died, and his heirs declined to pay any further contribution to the unlucky annuity; but on this occasion the law was on Beethoven's side, and confirmed to him what remained of his settled income, which, with the allowance of six hundred florins made by the Archduke Rudolph, amounted to nine hundred florins, and continued Beethoven's for the rest of his life.—(*Schindler.*)

At this period Beethoven was employed to write, and fulfilled the engagement, for which he was liberally paid, producing music for the "Scotch Songs" brought out as a national work by Mr. George Thompson, Edinburgh. Beethoven, to the last, intermingled with his graver studies

these lighter efforts, even supplying occasionally dance-music to the public gardens.

In 1817, when Beethoven was forty-seven years of age, he wrote the "Symphony in F," that "type of freshness, independence, determination, gaiety, and humour;" and while the annoyances of his contention with his brother's widow were at their height, he produced the great "Sonata in B Flat, op. 106," "one of the most profoundly thoughtful and deeply considered of all his works."

M. Schindler alludes to the influence exercised in Vienna, at this time, by a society for the practice of classic music, especially Beethoven's, in the chamber style, at the house and under the superintendence of Czerny, where the chief had, among other assistants, the distinguished pianiste, Baroness Dorothea von Ertman, to whom Beethoven dedicated his "Sonata, op. 101." M. Schindler writes of the best kind of chamber music as "that really inexhaustible mine of the profoundest and most expressive musical poetry."

In 1818, in the third period of Beethoven's life, Beethoven's illustrious pupil, as assiduous as he was illustrious, the only one whom the master had instructed in the theory of harmony, and his constant forbearing friend,* the Archduke Rudolph was appointed to the Archbishopric of Olmütz; and Beethoven, approaching his fiftieth year, determined to celebrate the installation of the new archbishop, and the long friendship which had subsisted between them, by the composition of a mass that should

* Beethoven would forget his pupils, even the *dames de prédilection*, for weeks at a time. The Archduke begged Beethoven not to attend him when the composer felt ill; but the fact was, that Beethoven always fancied he felt ill when he had to wait on his royal pupil.

be the masterpiece of all his noble work. But so great were his aspirations, and so unwearied the pains which he took in the execution, becoming slower and slower* of his vast projects, that, although it was not till the year 1820 that the archbishop was installed, and Beethoven had more than a year's preparation for the event, his self-imposed term of labour exceeded it by two years; and not only was the mass too late, but comprehending, as it did, in its stupendous proportions, more than all the massiveness, profoundness, and intensity of enthusiasm of Beethoven's most characteristic works, it was far beyond popular comprehension; it was also quite unsuited for celebration in a church service.

M. Schindler furnishes a ludicrous anecdote of the danger which a portion of the great mass once underwent. After one of Beethoven's incessant packings up and removals, the score of the *Kyrie* in the mass was a-missing. Every search proved in vain, and Beethoven was beside himself; when several days afterwards the large sheets of the missing MS. were discovered in the waste paper which the old housekeeper had employed to wrap round boots and shoes and kitchen utensils.

M. Schindler mentions Beethoven as in high health at the commencement of this enterprise, and that even to the end of the Credo, towards which he advanced rapidly, he was "the boisterous, heaven-storming giant" of old, but that with his ever growing intense abstraction there came a change over the whole man, especially over his physical condition, which all his friends observed.

In the intervals of composing this Mass in D, Beethoven

* Beethoven had a habit of writing above his own second thoughts in corrections, "better," "better."

wrote three famous pianoforte sonatas—those in E op. 109, in A Flat op. 110, and in C Minor op. 111.

In the course of these busy years, Beethoven is known to have suffered such pecuniary distress from his various losses, and the mismanagement which occurred in his erratic housekeeping, that those days which are marked in his journal as "bad days" are explained by his biographer to mean days when, from actual want of money, Beethoven could procure no refreshment beyond "a few biscuits and a glass of beer."

At the same time M. Schindler declares that with the perversity, morbid jealousy of his fellows, and apprehension of ultimate destitution, which became so conspicuous in Beethoven in the last years of his life, he persisted—as at the later epoch—in holding in abeyance bank shares, the sale of which would have at once relieved his pressing wants.

M. Schindler supplies some quotations from Beethoven's journal, which show that his housekeeping was set to one unvarying tune—that of the indignant dismissal, or voluntary flight of his servants from a master as imperious and with much less consideration than what was possessed by Dean Swift:—"15th February, the kitchen-maid came; 8th March, the kitchen-maid gave a fortnight's warning. 22nd March, the new kitchen-maid came; 20th July, given warning to the housekeeper. . . . . 1st July, the kitchen-maid arrived; 28th July, at night the kitchen-maid ran away." Mr. Haweis quotes in the same style:—"Nancy is too uneducated for a housekeeper; indeed, quite a beast. . . . . The cook's off again. . . . . I shied half-a-dozen books at her head."

Among the anecdotes of Beethoven's violence when provoked, the most outrageous and absurd are those of his flinging a dish full of stewed beef and gravy at the head of a waiter standing with his hands full in the dining-room of the Swan, while he and Beethoven swore and shouted, and the general company roared with laughter: and of Beethoven summoning his cook to his presence to answer to the charge of sending him bad eggs among the ten for the pap, or bread soup, which, like his coffee, he prepared with his own hand, and on her cautiously hovering on the threshold of her master's room, being received with a battery of the suspected eggs, aimed at her with as much precision as promptness.

"The most exquisite confusion reigned in his house; books and music were scattered in all directions; here the residue of a cold luncheon, there some full, some half-emptied bottles; on the desk the hasty sketch of a new quartett; in another quarter the remains of a breakfast; on the pianoforte the scribbled hints for a noble symphony, yet little more than in embryo; hard by, a proof sheet, waiting to be returned; letters from friends, and on business, spread all over the floor; between the windows a Stecchino cheese, and on one side of it ample vestiges of a genuine Verona salad; and, notwithstanding all this confusion, he constantly eulogized, with Ciceronian eloquence, his own neatness and love of order! When, however, for whole hours, days, and often weeks, something mislaid was looked for, and all search had proved fruitless, then he changed his tone, and bitterly complained that everything was done to annoy him. But the servants knew the natural goodness of their master; they suffered him to

rave, and in a few moments it was forgotten, till a similar occasion renewed the scene." *—(*Seyfried's Work.*)

It was at this time, doubtless, that rumours of Beethoven's insanity were occasionally rife in Vienna. Withal the city knew its great man, and when the odd, little, square, spare figure, out at elbows, and with flying hair and beard, would appear rushing along on the ramparts or in the suburbs, the ordinary passer-by made way for Beethoven, and gazed after him in wondering admiration.

But Beethoven's popularity with his countrymen was on the wane, and was to be replaced even during his lifetime by that of the Italian composer, Rossini. Though Beethoven retained many old, firm, and long-suffering friends there, it was foreign strangers, rather than natives of Vienna, who sought, in the course of the years that remained, to break through the barriers which his infirmity and his moroseness continued to build up around him, and succeeded in procuring the honour of an introduction and an interview. To these strangers Beethoven was sometimes gentle and courteous. Moscheles visited

* The coffee which Beethoven took for breakfast he carefully prepared himself, solemnly counting sixty beans for each cup. With regard to other details of his diet, he was exceedingly fond of fish, of bread soup, drank water copiously, did not know good wine from bad, and liked to wind up the day with a glass of beer and a pipe of tobacco. He had an old-fashioned habit of frequenting taverns and coffee-houses, where he might frequently be seen by strangers on the look-out for the great composer. Beethoven was very forgetful in the ordinary affairs of life. Perhaps the most conspicuous instance given is, that of his having received the gift of a beautiful horse, which, after he had ridden it for a few times, he forgot so entirely, that his servant hired it out for his own profit, keeping back the bills of provender, that Beethoven might not be reminded, by the sight of the claims for food, of the existence of its consumer.

Beethoven, accompanied by his brother, "who was burning with anxiety to see the great man." Arrived at the house door," writes Moscheles, "I had some misgiving, knowing Beethoven's dislike to strangers, and asked my brother to wait below, whilst I felt my way. After short greetings, I asked Beethoven,—'May I be allowed to introduce my brother to you?' He replied hurriedly, 'Where is he, then?' 'Below,' was the answer. 'What! below?' said he, with some vehemence, then rushed downstairs, seized my astonished brother by his arm, dragged him up into the middle of his room, exclaiming, 'Am I so barbarously rude and unapproachable?' He then showed great kindness to the stranger."

On another occasion he was stubbornly inaccessible; he did not receive Rossini, though the latter, when in Vienna, called on him four times.

When Clementi was in Vienna, and Beethoven, who had intended to call for the Italian, had been led by his brother to take it as an affront that Clementi had not first called for him, the two masters, each attended by a pupil, used often to dine at the same table at the Swan; but not only was there no recognition between the masters, the pupils, who knew each other, dared not acknowledge the acquaintance, as each was aware that in that case he should lose his lessons.—(*Ries.*)

From none of his associates did Beethoven receive less consideration than from his surviving brother, Johann, the chemist, who had amassed property for which he valued himself greatly, and who had, on New Year's-day, 1823, sent in a card to Ludwig van Beethoven, pompously inscribed, in reference to a purchase of land which had just been effected, "Johann van Beethoven, landowner"

(*Gutsbesitzer*), when Beethoven returned the compliment by sending back the card with the inscription written on the other side, "Ludwig van Beethoven, brain-owner" (*Hirnbesitzer*).

In 1822, Beethoven's nephew left school, and joined his uncle, who freed the spoilt lad from all restraint, and made him his own master at seventeen years of age.

In 1823, Beethoven determined to offer for sale the MS. of what he considered his "greatest and best" work, his Mass, to the different European courts, at the price of fifty ducats. Only four courts availed themselves of the offer, and these were Prussia, Russia, Saxony, and France. The two remaining copies were bought by the governor of Posen, and the president of a musical society in Frankfort-am-Maine. Two anecdotes are connected with this sale. The King of Prussia suggested, through his ambassador, that Beethoven might prefer the decoration of an order to the stipulated sum. If there were any thrifty idea in the suggestion, it was foiled, for Beethoven stuck emphatically to the fifty ducats. The King of France, Louis XVIII., sent, in addition to the ducats, a gold medal bearing the royal portrait and the inscription, "Donné par le Roi à Monsieur Beethoven."

In 1823, Beethoven, while spending the summer in the country, wrote, to his own great delectation, the "Thirty-three Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli." On his return to Vienna, he consented, in spite of the dissuasions of his friends, to conduct his opera of *Fidelio*, on a fresh representation at the Court Opera House. Notwithstanding the utmost assistance rendered to him, his physical incapacity became so apparent on rehearsal, that even he motioned to M. Schindler to write down an explanation of

the embarrassment visible on every countenance. When his request was complied with, he immediately left the orchestra, but could not shake off the melancholy with which his failure had filled him.

Suggestions were made to Beethoven at this date to write another opera, and for some time he was occupied with the project, but his old difficulties with the German opera singers caused him finally to give up the idea.

In the winter of 1823, Beethoven commenced his great choral symphony for which he had made sketches during the previous summer, and which he finished in the following spring, 1824. The first movements of the symphony are understood to express "Sorrow's crown of sorrow," while the next movements pass into exuberant joy on the text of Schiller's "Freude schöner Götterfunken," with vocal music introduced to give additional effect to the instrumental music. But so strongly did the current of popular favour in Vienna now turn to Italian composers, that Beethoven was disposed to bring out the Choral Symphony and the last mass in Berlin, while he was altogether discouraged from the vision of a grand oratorio which had taken the place of an opera in his imagination. However, the friends of German music in Vienna, who formed still an influential body, addressed a letter to Beethoven begging him to reconsider his resolution, which would inflict disgrace on the musical capital so long his home, and once so alive to his genius. In this letter the writers entreated Beethoven to withdraw from his retirement, and to bestow on them fresh gifts from the abundance of his wealth, and not permit the youngest offspring of his genius to appear one day as strangers in the land of their birth. This German soil, the writers declared, was

invaded by the footsteps of foreign art; German works had become the echo of those strangers; and Beethoven's friends called on him to repulse the invasion, and rescue the German opera. This letter was signed by thirty of the most distinguished musicians and lovers of music in Vienna, headed by Prince Lichnowsky.

The letter, and the movement of which it was the expression, so far softened Beethoven, that he consented that a concert should be given at the Kärntnerthor Theatre, Vienna, 7th May, 1824, when Beethoven was fifty-four years of age. Portions of the mass and of the choral symphony were performed, and in spite of the extreme difficulty of the music, which rendered it far beyond even a Viennese audience; and notwithstanding the peculiarities of the arrangement of the music which Beethoven absolutely refused to alter, in which the singers were called upon to sing parts in so high a key, that the upper notes had to be omitted, or else the parts screamed, not sung, not only was the theatre densely full—though no member of the royal family was present save the Archduke Rudolph (Beethoven, for that matter, received no court patronage)—but the applause was tumultuous. On this occasion occurred a pathetic incident. Beethoven, standing with his back to the great house, remained quite unconscious of its applause till Mademoiselle Ungher, one of the *prime donne* (Madame Sontag being the other), roused his attention by "turning round and making signs," so as to make him turn his head and see what he could no longer hear, when the shouts became so deafening that they are said even to have penetrated those sealed ears.

The gratification of this success was sensibly impaired by the fact, that on the theatrical manager attempting to

repeat the representation of Beethoven's music, the house was but half full; the manager suffered considerable loss, and Beethoven could only be persuaded with difficulty to accept the sum guaranteed to him. In all these occurrences Beethoven's nearly frantic jealousy of the truth of his friends to his interests, which M. Schindler frankly admits, and his irritable impracticability seem to have largely undone the many good offices undertaken on his account.

The Philharmonic Society repeatedly invited Beethoven to visit England, and such a visit was long with him a cherished scheme destined never to be accomplished.

In this year (1824) Beethoven entered into what proved a disastrous engagement with a Russian prince to furnish him with one or two quartetts to be dedicated to the prince, and to be his sole property for a year, after which Beethoven was to have the right of publishing them on his own account. M. Schindler describes Beethoven as so fascinated by the flattering correspondence of this Prince Nicholas von Galitzin that the composer not only laid aside his oratorio, a grand requiem, and a tenth symphony which he had also had in consideration, but postponed indefinitely a favourite design which was to have been the fitting conclusion of his artistic life—the setting of Goethe's *Faust* to music.

In the winter of 1824 and spring of 1825 Beethoven, for the first time during many years, took a house in the town, and not in the suburbs, that his nephew might attend the University. The change was followed by a long and severe illness. On his recovering Beethoven composed the Quartett No. 12, in which the adagio refers to his circumstances. About this time he made a favourable sale

to a publishing firm in Mainz of his "Mass in D," his ninth Symphony, and various minor works; but the funds which the composer thus acquired he declined doggedly to use for his own benefit, having a romantically generous rather than judicious desire of forming with them a fund for his nephew, grown into a forward lad of twenty years of age, and just about to overshadow Beethoven's last dwelling—it could hardly be called home—in the *Scharzpanier* House, on the glacis of the suburb of Währing, with a cloud of shame and distress. Young Beethoven is said to have been clever, but without moral principle or loyal feeling; and the effect o. his uncle's system of upbringing—excessively indulgent, yet at times harshly repressive, and having at last every trace of tutelage relinquished, and liberty, approaching to license, which had no bond but honour to restrain it, granted to the young man, his course of life became so notoriously evil, that at the age of twenty he was publicly expelled from the University. Some of Beethoven's letters to his nephew, which are given by M. Schindler, are piteous evidence of how the uncle's heart was wrung, and how bitter was his disappointment in the overthrow of all his hopes in his adopted son. Now the writer beseeches, and now he promises freely to condone all former offences: in all these is a passionate regard which the wretched lad returned with far more than the ordinary prodigal's heartlessness and ingratitude. Young Beethoven consummated his wrong-doing and his sins against his uncle by an ineffectual attempt to take his own life, for which act, he was, according to Austrian law, treated as a state criminal, and thrown into prison.

By the utmost exertion of the elder Beethoven's interest, on the liberation of the culprit, a commission in the army

was procured for him; but his insolent defiance of his uncle's wishes, and utter neglect of the man who had reared him with many sacrifices and the fondest expectations, saw no improvement, and planted many a thorn in Beethoven's death-bed. Beethoven's anxiety on his nephew's account, and a long journey which the elder man had to take for the younger in the depth of winter, brought on Beethoven an inflammation of the lungs, followed by dropsy His constitution had for some years been giving way, and was unable to stand the demands made upon it by the severity of the latter malady, from which he suffered severely. It was in the course of this illness, and after the drains which had been made on his resources, that, according to M. Schindler, Beethoven wrote to his Prussian correspondent, Prince Nicholas von Galitzin, and requested a settlement of their accounts. Receiving no answer, Beethoven wrote to influential third parties begging them to use their influence with the prince. Their reply was contained in the information that the prince had joined the army in Persia without having left behind him any instructions as to further payment of Beethoven. Apparently there had been a misunderstanding between the two, for some time after the publication of M. Schindler's biography, Prince Nicholas von Galitzin vindicated himself from the charge brought against him, by publishing documents to prove that he had discharged the debt within the stipulated time.

But it was, doubtless, under the impression that he had suffered a severe loss from the prince's failure in the fulfilment of his obligations that Beethoven's mind became more and more possessed with the idea that he would be reduced in sickness and age to absolute destitution, and

under this delusion he wrote with his own tremulous hand, and caused letters, which were written by others and signed by him, to be sent to his friends in England, soliciting, on the ground of his illness and impoverished circumstances, the Philharmonic Society to renew, and that speedily, a proposal which they had once made of giving him a benefit concert. The response of the Philharmonic Society, forwarded by the first post, was to request Beethoven's acceptance of one hundred pounds sterling, "to provide the necessary comforts and conveniences during your illness," while the benefit concert was to be arranged at a future period. It is an illustration of the morbid extent to which the fear of poverty and the distrust of his friends had increased on Beethoven, that at the time of receiving this donation he, who was by nature a proud and an independent as well as a hard-working man, was in the possession of bank shares to the amount of one thousand pounds; not only so, but, in acknowledging the grant, he still pressed for the performance of the benefit concert, though he begged that the hundred pounds forwarded to him might be deducted from the profits.

Beethoven in his last illness was carefully and kindly watched by several old friends, including the brothers-in-law Von Breuning, and Schindler, and Beethoven's old pupil, Ries. The last work which he completed was a movement in the Quartett in B flat. The last of his compositions for which he eagerly schemed and planned was the tenth Symphony, for which he had provided many sketches. A great solace of his illness was the study of the works of Handel, of which a complete and fine edition in forty volumes had recently been presented to Beethoven,

to his great delight, by Mr. Stumpff—a countryman, doubtless, by his name, and who was the proprietor of a harp manufactory in London.

By a will which Beethoven made in his last days, he rescinded every expression of vehement resentment and alienation which he had allowed himself to utter against his nephew, and left the young man his sole heir, failing to make a provision for the two faithful servants who had waited on him to the last.

He viewed the approach of death with calmness and fortitude. When his end drew near he requested the sacrament to be administered to him, a singular mark, from such a man, of outward homage to the rites of a religion in the creed of which he was not a believer. He died in his house in Vienna in the midst of a great thunder and hail storm which broke over the city on the 26th of March, 1827. He was in his fifty-eighth year.

Beethoven's funeral, unlike that of Mozart, was public, and conducted with every mark of honour. Twenty thousand people assembled in the quarter where the composer had lived. The usual prayers were followed by a chant before the procession started; the body was borne on the shoulders of eight principal singers of the Viennese Opera House, while walking at the sides were thirty-six torch-bearers, who were well-known authors, composers, and musicians—among them Czerny, Schubert, Lablache, &c., &c., the whole in full mourning, with white roses and bunches of lilies fastened to the crape on their arms. The chief mourners and the pupils of the Conservatoire and of St. Anne's followed. A *Miserere*, with the words adapted for the occasion to a solemn composition for four trombones by Beethoven, was intoned as the procession

approached the church—that of the Trinity at the Fathers Minorites in Alser Street. The body was placed on a bier at the foot of the high altar while the prayers were said and a special anthem sung. The coffin was then taken in a hearse drawn by four horses, and followed by a line of more than two hundred carriages to its resting-place in the grave-yard of Währing. At the gate of the cemetery poems were recited and read by tragedians and poets. Finally, wreaths of laurel were dropped upon the coffin. Tributes to Beethoven's memory, in the shape of requiems, were given in various churches of Vienna during the month following his decease, together with a musical performance which included some of his greatest sacred works.

In appearance Beethoven was not more than five feet four inches in height, having a compact muscular frame. His head was very large, crowned with long, bushy, grey hair, to which he frequently added an unshaven, long grey beard. He had an ample forehead and small brown eyes, which, if they became distended when he was composing, when he was laughing would seem to sink into his head. His nose was broad, his mouth well formed and capable of giving a pleasant smile; but M. Schindler records that Beethoven's loud laugh had the effect of distorting his marked features, of causing his large head to appear still larger, and of giving him generally the appearance of a grinning ape. His chin was marked in the middle and on each side by a long furrow; his complexion, save when it was embrowned by the sun, was yellow and sallow. In his moments of inspiration, which seized him in company or in the street, as well as at his writing-table, Beethoven's personal appearance is said to have undergone a great change, and to have acquired a remarkable air of dignity

and even of majesty. He never gesticulated except when in the orchestra. I have written of his careless, shabby dress. In one of the three good portraits of him, he is represented with a large shirt-collar lying over a loosely tied neckerchief, and in a coat, having also a large, low collar and turned-over cuffs, the coat ornamented with braid and tassels on the breast. He holds a score in one hand and a pen in the other.

Perversity and self-indulgence coloured the whole of what was otherwise the noble character of the man. Beethoven's was one of those passionate yet tender, jealous yet generous, natures that, unless controlled, elevated, and refined by the highest influence, create their own misery in exact proportion to their capacity for happiness; and, in doing so, are so evidently the chief sufferers that even their victims look upon and treat them with wistful indulgence and forbearance. In addition, there was so much that was great, good, and manly in Beethoven's perfect candour, such independence of spirit and general disinterestedness in his keen sense of his own shortcomings, and occasional ample amends for his offences, and he was so heavily afflicted in the infirmity of deafness which weighed on him most sorely, that from youth to age his friends stood by him and bore with him. But happily for his retaining even his truest friends, Beethoven's fits of frantic jealousy of these friends' integrity, and his extravagant irritation with their supposed blunders, were followed by as fervent remorse, when he would write:—"I fly to you, and in our embrace ask for my lost friend, and you will restore him to me—to your contrite, faithful, and loving friend—Beethoven."

Beethoven had his bitter enemies, and sustained his cruel

injuries among his fellows—over and above the crushing irredeemable calamity which no man could help; but it would be unjust and foolish to fail to recognise that the composer, with his genius in its special grievous isolation, his unreasonableness, pride, harshness, restlessness, and eccentricity, was for the most part gently dealt with. In the life which was so sad a one, for all its hero's exuberant and sometimes riotous fund of humour, he was from first to last his own worst enemy. At the same time, we must not forget that Beethoven in his flights and frenzies, with no restraining religious principle save a cold, vague, though earnest faith in God and goodness, was yet nobly distinguished by freedom from vice, which his soul loathed.

Beethoven's power as a composer consisted in a great comprehension of musical capabilities, with an equally great mastery over the means to his end. His music was full of deep thought, strong passion, and ever-varying feeling. But his compositions were sometimes founded on ludicrous enough incidents. The Quartett in F, op. 135, to which Beethoven affixed, among other enigmatical words, the phrase "Must it be?" "It must be," is said to refer to the landlord or landlady of a house, which the composer had occupied, having come to him with an almanac in hand to prove that the week was expired and the lodging must be paid. In the Sonatas in E major and in G major in op. 14, the subject is a dialogue between a husband and wife, or a lover and his mistress; the two parts in each sonata being intended to represent the principles of entreaty and resistance.

In his third and last style, as his profoundness deepened and the difficulties of his work became more and

more intricate and overwhelming, there were critics who held that he had fallen away from his first excellence, and who said, as art-critics said of Turner's last stage in painting, that Beethoven's last achievements in music were those of a great composer fascinated to madness with the labyrinths of his own conceptions. But there were other critics (and they are still more numerous in the present day) who maintained that it was the same giant mind in its greatest strain after more gigantic efforts, and that in the very dimness of that strain to ordinary minds, there was still an ineffable height of sublimity. Beethoven in music has been compared to Michael Angelo in painting. Beethoven lived, as I have had occasion to write, to see his nobly thoughtful, grand music superseded by the much easier and much more sensuous and showy Italian music; and if this result occurred in Germany, much more was it established in France and England. According to M. Schindler's criticism of more than thirty years ago, the unpopularity of Beethoven's music was increased by its being given to young and amateur performers,* who were quite incapable of appreciating its transcendent merits; by those portions of it being most frequently selected which could best display the dexterity of the performer, with little reference to the infinitely finer qualities of Beethoven's work; and perhaps, as a natural consequence of the last error, by an increasing tendency to depart from Beethoven's intention and mode in giving his music in much faster time than Beethoven would have approved, and so increasing its difficulty tenfold. Lastly,

* "He, above all, enjoined those who undertook to play his works to have some poetry in their nature. 'Read Shakespere,' was once the counsel given to an aspirant."—*Athenæum.*

M. Schindler believed that a growing evil, which has certainly not decreased, since he among others pointed it out thirty years ago, existed in the colossal size of modern orchestras, delighting the mass by the imposing crash of the performance, but which were destructive of the multifarious, striking, or delicate effects of the best music, such as, in Beethoven's and in Handel's time, was given with orchestras of not more than at the very utmost two or three hundred performers.

Beethoven and Gluck both developed their greatest originality in middle life. "We musicians, whatever we may be," Moscheles used to say, "are mere satellites of the great Beethoven, the dazzling luminary." Cherubini said of Beethoven's later music, "it makes one sneeze." —(*Mendelssohn's Letters.*) Beethoven remains a mighty master-mind in music to the few in every country who follow such master-minds; as musical culture advances, these few minds increase; and not only has there been a growing reaction in favour of Beethoven's music within late years, but at a recent musical festival in England it was hailed as a favourable symptom that, even in such a popular assembly, one of Beethoven's most stately and difficult pieces was listened to with "marked interest and delight." —(*Athenæum.*)* Beethoven regarded Handel and Mozart as the first composers; and after them, Sebastian Bach. He slighted and bore a grudge at Haydn, and his esteem for Weber was at least variable in its character. But Beethoven was not generally an unkind or ungenerous critic: though he despised Italian music of the Rossini

* The two sonatas known as the "Moonshine" and the "Appassionata," and the concerto called in England the "Emperor," have long been in favour with English lovers of music.

school, he would take pains to encourage and help native artists.

At the end of the pieces arranged from *Fidelio* by Moscheles, the latter had written the end with "God's help," when Beethoven wrote underneath, "O man, help thyself." Moscheles has this anecdote of his work with Beethoven:—"When I came early in the morning to Beethoven, he was still lying in bed; he happened to be in remarkably good spirits, jumped up immediately and placed himself just as he was at the window looking out on the Schottenbastei with the view of examining the *Fidelio* numbers which I had arranged. Naturally a crowd of street boys collected under the window; when he roared out, 'Now, what do those confounded boys want?' I laughed and pointed to his own figure. 'Yes, yes; you are quite right,' he said, and hastily put on a dressing-gown."—(*Moscheles' Life.*)

Beethoven's early love of a practical joke seems to have survived to the end; for M. Schindler (who had engraved on his visiting-cards the words, "The friend of Beethoven") has this story of the composer's middle age:—The wife of a pianoforte player and composer in Vienna had such a longing desire for a lock of Beethoven's hair, that she induced her husband to apply to a common friend to try whether Beethoven would not gratify her wish. The friend himself proved too fond of a joke to be a loyal messenger. He persuaded Beethoven to send the lady a lock of hair from a goat's beard, which Beethoven's coarse grey hair nearly resembled; and when she was pluming herself on her treasure, another friend a party to the trick which had been practised, informed the hero-worshipper of the deception. The husband wrote an

indignant letter to Beethoven, upbraiding him with the mockery, and so fairly shamed the composer for the discourtesy and unkindness of the jest in which he had joined, that he wrote a letter of apology to the aggrieved lady, inclosing in it a real lock of his hair, and refused to receive further visits from the gentleman who had instigated him to the horse-play.

CHAPTER V.

Weber, 1786—1826.

CARL MARIA VON WEBER was born at Eutin, a little town in the Duchy of Holstein, in 1786. His father was a violinist. Indeed, the name of Weber had in Germany a connection with music similar to that associated with the name of Bach, though at a later period and on a smaller scale. The Weber family, so mixed up with the fortunes of Mozart, were cousins of Carl Maria von Weber, and figured among the musical Webers. According to a French authority, young Weber's father "destined him for the arts in general, and music in particular." The destination proved more effectual than is apt to be the case in parents' high-flown dreams. At the same time, the retired life which the Webers led, and the isolation in which they kept their children, while it stimulated their imagination and induced reflection, is said to have deepened in the boy the tendency to pensiveness and to morbid pride, which was a marked feature in the character of the man. At first, the clever child took to painting and engraving almost as readily as to music; and although he soon abandoned the first for the last, he showed this halting between two careers again when he was a little older; and probably this double inclination and uncertainty helped

to intensify to him the grave drawback of a desultory and not a thorough education. Weber himself attributed the defects of his musical education to his father's frequent change of residence, partly from necessity, partly from choice, which prevented the little pupil remaining long enough with any teacher to receive permanent good from him, and exposed him to frequent changes of theory and style. There was no want of appreciation of his younger boy's gifts (there was an elder son who became also a musician) and of ambition for their future on the part of the elder Weber; indeed, he seems to have been only too anxious to fill the *rôle* of the elder Mozart with another infant phenomenon in the person of Carl Maria to take the place of Wolfgang Amadeus. Neither was young Weber deficient in diligence and steadiness; but the teachers were not so good, the time granted was too short, and the whole scheme was curtailed and crippled; and above all, the juvenile hero, Carl Maria, on whom the attention of his family was concentrated, whose every effort was exalted and applauded, and his small immature productions published, was not of the stuff that Mozart was made of, to resist the damaging process, and far outgrow it, though no doubt it helped to bring about Mozart's early death.

Carl Maria von Weber was a genius too in his way, and was to have a popularity as wide and as enthusiastic in its kind, if on a far lower level than that of Mozart and Beethoven; but the compass of his power was limited, and not all his genuine originality and the harmony which was an instinct in him, could undo the injuries inflicted on him by being forced too soon into public notice, and by his training having fallen far short of Mozart's in completeness.

Weber's first good teacher was Hilburghausen, of Hauschel, and the lessons which the boy of ten received enabled Weber to become the fine and finished pianist which he afterwards showed himself; but he was not more than two years under Hilburghausen's care. Weber's next teacher procured for him, by a considerable sacrifice from the boy's parents, who went to reside in Salzburg that their son might command a worthy instructor, was Michael Haydn, the brother, and not an unworthy brother, of Joseph Haydn. But the much thought of lad could not endure the cold and severe character and teaching of the master, and seemed soon to have abandoned the necessary discipline, to follow his own instincts.

He was made to publish at this time (1798), when he was but twelve years of age, doubtless incited by the mistaken judgment of his parents, six little fugues for the clavecin.*

A little later Weber was taken to Munich, where he received singing-lessons from Valesi, and became the pupil in composition of Kalcher, organist of the Chapel Royal. To this master Weber declared in his prime that he owed much of such knowledge as he possessed. While under Kalcher's instructions, Weber composed his first opera, the subject being *Die Macht der Liebe und des Weins* ("The Power of Love and Wine"), a mass, and several sonatas, pieces for the piano, and trios for the violin; but, with growing wisdom and fastidiousness, he committed all this work subsequently to the flames.

About 1799, Sennefelder, having published his first attempts in lithography, Weber, with his old uncertainty as to a career rising again, became possessed with the idea

* Fétis's "Biographie Universelle des Musiciens."

of renouncing the joyous science, and becoming a lithographer. He procured the necessary tools, and worked so hard at the art, with which his early discursiveness had given him a familiarity, that, according to his own account, in an autobiographical sketch which he wrote, he ended by persuading himself that he was the real inventor, as he was certainly the improver, of the recent discovery. He begged his father to carry him to Freyburg, where he might command better materials for his operations; when as rapidly as the fancy had sprung up, it was succeeded by disgust at the mechanical nature of the work, and Weber became once more a musician, signalising his return to music by a great boyish success, equal to the early triumphs of Mozart.

Weber, still not more than fourteen years of age, composed the opera of *Das Waldmädchen* ("The Wood Nymph"); and not only was it successfully represented at Munich, its birthplace, but it was brought out and represented fourteen times at Vienna, was translated into Bohemian for the National Theatre at Prague, and was put on the stage at St. Petersburg. To this opera also Weber's more cultivated taste took exception in later years, when it was entirely remodelled by him.

In 1801, the Weber family returned to Salzburg, when Weber, always very susceptible to external influences, and without a thorough education to enable him to weigh and master these influences, was so much affected by an article which appeared in the *Leipsic Musical Gazette*, as to induce him to write a comic opera, entitled *Peter Schmoll und seine Nachbarn* ("Peter Schmoll and his Neighbours"); but the young composer received a salutary check from the opera's proving a failure when it was performed at Augsburg in

the year of its production, 1801. More serious study followed when Weber's father having caused the lad to make an artist tour, like the year of travel of a German apprentice, by Leipsic to Hamburg and Holstein—young Weber bought some books on theory in the course of his journeys, and set himself to master them, and, as he himself confessed afterwards, once and again, when he had believed himself secure in the foundations of his art, he was shaken in the conviction by the random questions of amateurs, and driven to return to the first principles of philosophy and nature, in order to construct a new system to succeed that which had been superseded. Perhaps the experience was not very novel, as its result was sufficiently absurd in the sweeping criticism and superb self-confidence of sixteen in its own power of correcting errors and re-creating plans, but it was this half-educated uncertainty as to his ground, this shifting of his position and opinions, together with a species of hesitation and instability which seemed to belong to his excitable temperament that was only bold and arrogant on the surface, which made life and composition so hard to Weber, and caused even his great successes hardly to counterbalance his disappointments and defeats.

In 1803, Weber went to Vienna, and became the pupil of the Abbé Vogler. With this able master, Weber set himself to study conscientiously for two years, until he became Vogler's favourite pupil; and it was probably the best proof of the attainment that the pupil was making, that during these two years all the original compositions which he acknowledged were some pieces for the piano.

In 1804, when Weber was still but eighteen years of

age, he was offered and accepted the post of musical director to the theatre at Breslau. His youth and want of experience, together with what is a frequent accompaniment of youth and inexperience in a place of authority, a crude, harsh policy is said to have rendered Weber unpopular with his brethren in art at Breslau, although it is acknowledged that the young director showed greater intelligence and steadiness than might have been expected from his years. In one light the situation was of great service to Weber by lending him the opportunity of acquiring a practical acquaintance with orchestras and choirs. His compositions at this period were limited to the retouching of former works, and to the new work of a part of his opera of *Rübezahl* ("Number Nip, the Mountain Spirit").

In 1806, Weber, then twenty years of age, was invited by Prince Eugene of Wurtemburg, an enthusiastic musician and patron of music, to take up his residence at the prince's little court in Silesia. Tempted by the royal appreciation and sympathy, Weber complied; but the inevitable great war between France and Germany, with the battle of Jena in its train, calling upon German princes to be stern soldiers and not piping musicians, demolished the pretty theatre and elegant chapel of Prince Eugene; and cast Weber adrift on the world. He tried to make a tour and to give concerts; but it was not a time for concerts, and he was forced to accept the asylum offered him at Stuttgart by Prince Louis, another prince of the house of Wurtemburg. In this retreat Weber re-wrote his *Waldmädchen*, re-naming it *Sylvana*, and *Der Erste Ton* ("The First Sound")—a kind of drama.

In 1809 Weber quitted Stuttgart for Darmstadt, in

order to be with his old master Vogler. At Darmstadt Weber became intimate with his namesake and fellow-musician, Godefroi Weber, and with the composer Meyerbeer. In 1810 Weber wrote for the grand-ducal theatre at Darmstadt his opera of *Abou Hassan:* but still no success in keeping with his youthful triumph in the *Waldmädchen* befell Weber. It was left for the warlike inspiration which was filling all German hearts and rousing them to deliver the Fatherland from the invader, and to give it a new and more glorious history, to bring out in a peculiar range of music the power of Weber, and to begin to establish his fame among his countrymen. In the meantime he was conducting the representation of *Abou Hassan* at Frankfort, and giving concerts there and at Munich, visiting Berlin and Vienna, and finally repairing to Prague, where he had been appointed director of the German Opera, and where he was to show great and matured capacity in the reorganization of orchestras and choirs. But, in the middle of these peaceful avocations and engagements, Weber, of all men, did not remain dead to patriotism and to the old Norsemen's battle-fury and battle-joy, which that patriotism had revived and made the passion of the hour, nor did he fail to express in thrilling music what Körner had uttered in immortal verse. The *Leier und Schwert* ("Lyre and Sword") songs of the poet and musician were sung by the flower of the Prussian youth, who rose simultaneously to throw off the yoke of the great Napoleon, just as the Prussian armies of a later day marched to their borders with *Die Wacht am Rhein!* as a watchword and a rallying cry. The fine cantata of *Kampf und Sieg* ("Combat and Victory"), composed by Weber in honour of Waterloo, fol-

lowed, and established the first phase of his popularity with his countrymen.

For an unexplained reason, in 1816, when Weber was thirty years of age, he suddenly resigned his situation as director of the German Opera at Prague, and led for some years a wandering and, so far as pecuniary remuneration went, a precarious existence, giving concerts here and there, refusing settled appointments, various offers of which were made to him, till in 1818 he received a proposal calling upon him to undertake the establishment of a German opera in Dresden, which, flattering alike his national sentiments, his devotion to music, and his consciousness of individual gifts, he could no longer resist.

The French authority to which I have had recourse offers in explanation of this unattached period of Weber's rather desultory career, and of certain peculiarities in his character, the suggestion that the composer had felt keenly the comparative want of success of his early manhood. All the more because he had been held up as a juvenile prodigy, and because he was recognised as an accomplished pianist, and even a popular composer of patriotic songs, the failure of any farther recognition wounded to the quick the man's pride and honest conviction of his own power, and confirmed in him the inclination to brooding soreness and sadness which delicacy of constitution and an exceptional childhood, had made latent. We are told in a few words how much Weber had till this time had to try him, in the coldness with which his operas (after the first juvenile production) had been received, in the difficulty which he had in finding a sale for his music, and in consequence of this difficulty the uncomprehending criticism which he was forced to put up with from editors

and publishers of his work, while only a little knot of professional men anticipated from him anything great in the future, and out of Germany his name had continued utterly unknown. But it is true that till this time, with the exception of his patriotic songs and cantata, Weber had written no work of importance which was not more or less marred by the limitation of his genius and the hesitation attributable to his defective education.

At the head of the Dresden Opera, however, Weber seemed to receive a new impetus, and enter on a fresh era of his life. Not only did he perform his duties as director with such fidelity and judiciousness that he has the credit of being the first man who gave good music to the people, and made it acceptable to them, by educating and raising their tastes, but he was led to write for them his opera of *Der Freyschütz* (The Free Shooter), in 1819-20, when he was in his thirty-fourth year. The opera was written on the text of the German author **Kind**, and in its wild romance, its popular if erratic sentiment, its use of national melodies, it was not only calculated to take by storm an audience of the German people, it was also singularly well constituted for exemplifying the genius of Weber.

It did not take from the effect of the opera, but rather enhanced it, that many of its most attractive airs were not, strictly speaking, original; that even the much-admired *Jäger Chor* (Hunter's Chorus) was only adapted, not composed, by Weber. No gratitude was felt to be too much to bestow on the genius and skill of the man who had gathered together the most exquisite people's melodies and given them a fitting dramatic setting. The production of the work was a splendid success, not only in Dresden,

where it was first presented on the 18th June, 1821, and when Weber sat with the hand of the wife whom he had married clasped in his, and the tears trickling down his cheeks, listening to the thunder of applause which announced to him that the object of his life's ambition was at last gained, but at Königstadt and Berlin, and all over Germany and musical Europe wherever the opera was played, it had the most brilliant and universal triumph. No German opera had ever before been so widely popular; not since Mozart's *Zauber Flöte* (so different and so much greater) had such a sensation been created in Germany. Weber sprang at once far ahead of all the living German composers, became besieged by the eager *impresarios* (managers of the opera) of different capitals, and seemed in a position to command, and not to be commanded by his public.

But he had shortly to encounter another and as yet unknown trial in the buffeted artist's life—the disadvantage of hasty exaltation to a pinnacle of favour, and the fickleness of the multitude in their often unthinking and generally unmeasured simultaneous applause or condemnation. Weber's next two works, *Preciosa* and *Euryanthe*, fell comparatively flat on the audiences that had elevated him by one achievement to an extravagant height, and who expected, they could hardly tell how much, from his future efforts.

Preciosa was a slight affair, but *Euryanthe* was composed in fulfilment of a commission for the German opera, and cost Weber the labour of eighteen months.* He had chosen an unfortunate text, in a little book by Madame Chezy, which was deficient alike in interest and incident;

* Fétis.

and not only had his subject failed to inspire him with the qualities which in itself it did not possess, but the very pains which he had taken to do it more than justice and maintain his reputation—dearly won and late of coming, were so evident as to defeat his purpose doubly.

The opera with regard to which some of his fastidious, impatient listeners parodied the name *Euryanthe* into "Ennuyante," failed, to Weber's intense mortification, the damping of his recently high-strung hopes, and the depressing of his easily depressed spirits. That the first judgment on *Euryanthe* had been as hasty and ill-considered as such judgments of such second achievements are apt to prove, being on a par in fairness with the excessive eulogies pronounced on the works which have preceded them, is shown by the fact that musical Germany, at least, has in a degree taken back its sentence when it is too late for Weber to receive the atonement. The overture to *Euryanthe* is declared very beautiful, and some other portions of the opera are at least quite worthy of the composer of *Der Freyschütz*.

In spite of the bad reception of *Euryanthe*, Weber was requested, in 1824, to write an opera for Covent Garden Theatre, London, of which Charles Kemble was then the manager. After much deliberation, Weber chose for his subject the theme of Wieland's poem, "The Fairy King Oberon and his Fairy World." M. Fétis quotes a letter of Weber's on the subject of this proposed opera, to indicate the anxious deliberation with which he worked. He had been told that he should have three months given him in which to compose the music. "Three months!" wrote back Weber; "that would hardly suffice me for the reading

of the piece and the designing of the plan of it in my head."

According to M. Fétis, the constitutional melancholy of Weber had long been increasing on him. His fame and the position which he had acquired by *Der Freyschütz*, together with his happiness in marriage, in his children, and in his friends, did not overcome this inherited and confirmed enemy. Doubtless the harassing worry which he suffered in the preparation and representation of *Euryanthe*, and in the preparation of *Oberon*, deepened the gloom which had a yet more significant source in his decidedly failing health from chest-complaint. He was forced to go to London to superintend the rehearsal of *Oberon*, and he parted from his family with pain. Accompanied by a friend, he journeyed first to Leipsic, Weimar, Frankfort, and Paris, where he stayed for a week. He was received in Paris with an enthusiastic welcome to the composer of *Der Freyschütz*, of which he wrote to his wife with evident pleasure.

In London, when Weber appeared in the orchestra of the Covent Garden Theatre, in order to conduct a representation of his *Der Freyschütz*, included in the terms of his engagement, he was hailed with a transport of delight. Of Weber's first appearance at Covent Garden Theatre, when selections from *Der Freyschütz* were given, Moscheles writes, "The thundering applause with which he was greeted affected us deeply; how much more himself, the honoured object of all this enthusiasm. . . . During the peals of applause, Weber shook hands with the singers (among them Braham and Miss Paton), to express his pleasure and satisfaction; at the end of the performance, the whole pit stood up on the benches, waving hats and

handkerchiefs, and cheering the composer. I saw him later on in the evening, sitting in the green-room completely exhausted; he was too ill fully to enjoy the signal triumph in a land of strangers." Other entries in Moscheles' diary are touching enough. After improvising at Braham's house, when his physical weakness made any great exertion dangerous, his countryman writes sadly, "And yet, at eleven o'clock, he hurried off to a large party given by Mrs. Coutts, as he was to be handsomely paid for his services. How we grieved at his thus over-exerting himself!" Again, after a dinner at Moscheles' own house, where Weber was the distinguished guest, the host records:—"What a treat! and yet even here the sight of him moved us to intense pity; for he could not utter a word when he entered our room; the exertion of mounting the small flight of stairs had completely taken away his breath; he sank into a chair nearest the door, but soon recovered and became one of the most delightful and genial of guests."

These welcome tributes came when they were sorely needed by the sinking body and spirit of the composer; but they served only to soften the disappointment of the partial failure of *Oberon*, in spite of its many beauties and peculiar charm. All Weber's public appearances in England were not triumphs. Moscheles gives a description of a disgraceful scene at Covent Garden Theatre on the night of Braham the singer's benefit, when the first part of the concert was given up to sailors' songs and an operetta in which Madame Vestris sang the nursery ditty of "*Goosie, goosie gander.*" When the serious part of the performance began, with Weber conducting in the overture to the *Ruler of Spirits*, the screams and hubbub in

the gallery made Moscheles' blood boil. When he himself sat down to the piano to give his *Recollections of Ireland*, the roughs in the gallery made themselves overpoweringly heard by whistling, hissing, shouting, and calling out, "Are you comfortable, Jack?" He had to stoop down to the leading violinist and say, "I shall continue to move my hands on the key-board as though really playing, make your band pretend to be playing also; after a short time I will give you a signal and we will leave off together. At last, when Miss Paton attempted a scena, she had three times to stop singing, when she burst into tears and gave up the effort. Quietness was only restored by a resumption of the common ballads and songs, which pleased the uncultivated portion of the audience.—(*Moscheles' Life.*)

Weber's concert too, to his own great mortification and that of all lovers of good music, was a failure; unfortunately he gave it on the evening of the Derby-day, and in ignorance, or regardless of the fact that his public concert clashed with private concerts in the houses of influential people; though Weber himself conducted the overtures to *Oberon* and *Euryanthe*, and Moscheles played, and Braham and Miss Stephens sang in the composer's service, it was "to an empty room."

Weber stayed on in London waiting to conduct another representation of *Der Freyschütz*, which was to be his benefit. In the meanwhile his disease gained ground on him with terrible rapidity. On the 30th of May he wrote to his wife, "You will not receive many more letters from me; answer this not to London, but to the Frankfort *poste restante*. I see your astonishment. I shall not go to Paris. What should I do there? I can neither walk nor

speak. What can I do better than direct my steps straight to my household gods?"

Fétis writes that Weber tried to deceive himself (and his wife also) when he referred to his return. *Der Freyschütz* was to be given on the 6th of June, 1826. Weber was to start for home on the very day following. But on the 2nd June he was only able to write what proved a fond farewell to his family, "May God bless you and preserve you in good health; would that I were in the midst of you!" On the 5th of June, 1826, the day before the proposed celebration of his opera, he died the saddest of sad deaths—that of a stranger in a strange land. He was forty years of age. Moscheles thus narrates Weber's melancholy end:—"Sunday.—When I visited the great man to-day, he talked very confidently of his return to Germany; but the frequent attacks of a dreadful convulsive cough, which left him completely prostrate, filled our minds with the utmost anxiety. When with great effort he managed to tell me that he intended starting in two days' time, that I was to prepare my letters, and he hoped to see me again to-morrow, I was deeply moved, although I never suspected that I was looking on him for the last time as a living man. I left him with his friends Kind and Fürstenau, and exchanged a few sad words with his kind host, Sir G. Smart,* who told me that on no account would Weber

* Sir George Smart, and his brother Henry, the latter of whom was a composer, the sons of a proprietor of a music warehouse in London, were eminent as conductors of orchestras and teachers of music. Both of them were honest and honourable men, much respected in their day. A nephew of Sir George Smart's, a younger Henry Smart, is well known to the musical world of the present day, and has come favourably before it, at the late musical festival, Glasgow, by his sacred cantata of *Jacob*.

suffer any one to sit up with him; that at night he locked the door of his bedroom, and that only to-day he had yielded to the earnest entreaties of his friends and promised to leave it open, adding that he had peremptorily refused to allow anybody, either friends or paid attendants, to watch beside him. June 5th.—Early this morning I was summoned in all haste to Sir G. Smart's. At eleven o'clock last night Fürstenau had conducted Weber to his bedroom; his friends went to his door at an early hour, but found it locked inside, contrary to Weber's promise; to do this he must have got up during the night. It was in vain to knock or call for admission; no answer came: so Sir George sent to me and other friends, and the door was broken open in our presence. The noise did not disturb the sleeper; it was his sleep of death. His head, resting on his left arm, was lying quietly on the pillow." On examining Weber's private papers, it was found that "besides the thousand pounds he must have earned in London, there was a further sum of a thousand pounds which he had received from the publishers Walch and Hawes for the pianoforte edition of *Oberon*."

Weber was buried in the Catholic Chapel, Moorfields.* There were proposals to have Mozart's *Requiem* given in the chapel, or in St. Paul's Cathedral, the receipts to be appropriated to raising a monument to Weber; but the proposals were opposed, and fell to the ground. Finally, the body lay in the chapel, Moorfields, and the public were admitted to the sight without any charge. After the service Mozart's *Requiem* was sung. Twelve musicians, including Moscheles, bore the body into the vault, whilst

* In 1844 Weber's son came to England, and had his father's body removed from Moorfields Chapel, London, to Dresden.

the funeral march from Handel's *Saul* was played. The next Philharmonic Society's concert was begun with the "Dead March in Saul" as a tribute to Weber's memory, and a benefit-concert of *Oberon* for the composer's family was given at Covent Garden, but only two-thirds of the house were filled.

Weber's life had something of the meteoric character of his chief hero, and of the reputation he won.

Originality and individuality of delightful genius within certain bounds are now freely granted to Weber. He is said, naturally, to have excelled in the expression of romantic melancholy, but to be less happy in the illustration of gaiety. His *Oberon* has a dreamy fantastic charm all its own, and, although it has never been so popular, it is held by critics to be in many respects equal to *Der Freyschütz*.

"I thought Weber a composer *sui generis*—one who had the imperishable glory of leading back to our German music a public vacillating between Mozart, Beethoven, and Rossini."—*Moscheles.*

Of Weber, Herr Pauer says that he was a German of the Germans, that *Der Freyschütz* is more popular than any of Mozart's operas, and that Weber's pianoforte pieces are more popular even than Mendelssohn's "songs without words." "Weber's defects arose from a want of thorough musical training, but they are nothing when set against his higher qualities—his imagination, grace, and sweetness." . . . . "For his pianoforte works we cannot be too thankful; the piano in his hands seems turned into a new instrument. He first invented the waltz, and imparted its true character to the Polonaise." . . . . "What he originated Schubert, Chopin, and Schumann have more highly perfected, and on Mendelssohn and Wagner his influence is undeniable."

CHAPTER VI.

Mendelssohn, 1809—1847.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY was born under a happy star, in 1809, at Hamburg. He was the grandson of an eminent German Jew, Moses Mendelssohn, who raised himself from a state of extreme poverty to one of opulence in the trade of a silk manufacturer, and who was still more highly distinguished by his learning and his philosophical researches. He was the intimate friend of the dramatist Lessing. His son, Abraham Mendelssohn, was converted to Christianity, and married a member of the Bartholdy family, whose name he assumed. He was like his father, not only a wealthy merchant, but an intellectual and accomplished man. His wife, the composer's mother, is spoken of as a woman "superior in every sense of the word—not merely in ordering her own household life, but in looking beyond it, to every influence and enjoyment from without which intellect, and art, and literature could furnish—a serene, cordial woman, as unpretending as she was gentle."* In a home thus sheltered and adorned, Felix was one of four children. He had an elder sister Fanny, a younger brother Paul, and a younger sister Rebecca. The mother was able to give her children

* Chorley.

lessons in music, and, as in the case of Nannerl Mozart and her brother Wolfgang, it was in teaching Fanny Mendelssohn music that the interested teacher discovered the surpassing musical genius of Fanny's younger brother. Madame Mendelssohn taught her little son in turn, prolonging his lessons by a minute a day. In 1812, when the boy was three years old, the Mendelssohn family removed to Berlin, and, in the Prussian capital, their house became more than ever a rallying-ground for the most eminent literary and scientific Germans of the day.

Among Mendelssohn's friends in childhood were Ferdinand David, and his sister Louise, a pair as musically united as ever were Wolfgang and Nannerl Mozart, or Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn. In the case of the Davids, the brother and sister performed in public—she on the piano and he on the violin—at a very juvenile age, just as the little Mozarts performed. In time Ferdinand David became Spohr's distinguished pupil and great exponent, and when he was a young man made a musical tour, accompanied by his sister, through the principal towns in Germany. Eventually he became Concert Meister and a professor in the Conservatoire Leipzig, and on Mendelssohn's death acted as one of his old friend's pall-bearers. Louise David, as Madame Dulcken, settled in London, where, like Nannerl Mozart in her native Salzburg, she was long known as an excellent music-teacher.

Young Mendelssohn was soon placed under the highest professional training, having Berger for his master in pianoforte playing, and Zelter for his master in musical composition. Under both his attainments were surprisingly great. He seemed to find no difficulty: in addition to the keenest intelligence and the command of a

great memory, he had, from the first, a "willingness" and faculty of finger which made all the combinations of keyed instruments easy to him. In addition, he was, like Mozart again, a singularly attractive boy in other respects than that of music. He was very handsome, with an aquiline nose, finely cut mouth, and bright eyes. He was full of high breeding—perfect in its unconsciousness, generous and affectionate in character, and lively and winning in temper. He had innumerable advantages which Mozart did not command. In the first place, the Mendelssohns possessed ample means, and had no temptation to subject the lad's gifts to a dangerous system of forcing; in the second, with all their love of music and their proud yet cautious acknowledgment of their son's musical genius, they had the liberality of culture in themselves, which caused them to render his education so far from being circumscribed by, or even concentrated on music, a very catholic education, including a good knowledge of the classics, a scholarly acquaintance with modern languages, and a careful study of mathematics and metaphysics, which some have called spiritual mathematics. Indeed, though his musical education was far from neglected, he was accustomed to say of it, in relation to his other acquirements, that he "got into music he hardly knew how." It would seem as if his father had felt some reluctance to bring up his brilliant elder son, who was, so far as money was concerned, independent of a profession, to be a musician; for not only did the elder Mendelssohn take Felix Mendelssohn to Paris, that the veteran composer Cherubini might there ratify the judgment of the musical professors of Berlin on the lad's decided vocation, and indications of rare and remark-

able genius, before the father would let the son look upon the pursuit of music as his destination, but in a letter of sensible, kindly advice on family forbearance, written to his brother and sisters at home by Felix Mendelssohn, from Rome, in 1830, he refers to his father's irritability when he (Felix) chose to pursue his own path in his musical studies. How the prosperous merchant and banker "incessantly abused Beethoven and all visionaries," until one day, on Felix persisting in upholding Beethoven, he was "even sent out of the room," when it happily occurred to the stripling that he "might speak a great deal of truth, and yet avoid the particular truth obnoxious to my father," and then "the aspect of affairs speedily began to improve and all went well."

The supreme bent of young Mendelssohn was not to be resisted; neither was there more than a passing indication on the part of the man of the world, the head of the music-loving German family, to resist the bent. Young Mendelssohn's first public appearance as a performer was when he played Dussek's military concerto, in 1817, at eight years of age. When Mendelssohn was twelve years of age, Sir Jules Benedict saw the boy at work on an artistic pianoforte quartett, and ready for a game in the garden when he had done his work.* Zelter, Mendelssohn's master in composition, was so fascinated with the little fellow that he took him at the same age—twelve years—on a visit to Goethe at Weimar, where began that friendship between the boy composer and the aged poet which was at once celebrated by the dedication of three pianoforte quartetts, which young Mendelssohn had been composing, and which were his first published work.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

In 1824, Mendelssohn, at fifteen years of age, won another influential, lasting friend in the composer Moscheles, who was visiting Berlin, and who taught for a time the rich merchant's accomplished son. "I never for a moment lost sight of the fact," said Moscheles in reference to giving music lessons to the fifteen-years-old lad, Felix Mendelssohn, "that I was sitting next to a master, not a pupil." Of Fanny Mendelssohn the same excellent judge declared that she "played by heart, and with admirable precision, fugues and Passacailles by Bach. I think one may well call her a thorough Mus. Doc."

In 1825, after the visit to Paris, and the fortifying opinion given by Cherubini, an opera which Felix Mendelssohn had composed, his first and last published opera, *Die Hochzeit des Camacho* ("Camacho's Wedding"), was performed in Berlin when the composer was just sixteen years of age. It is said that the opera was listened to with pleasure by the audience, but that it was afterwards attacked by the critics, when it was withdrawn from representation. The result had a double effect on Mendelssohn. While he was really modest and unexacting under the confidence of assured ability, and the tinge of haughtiness which distinguished his manners in later years, he was sensitive, whether as boy or man, with "youthful petulance" added to his sensitiveness in the first instance, and thus he had an indelible impression made on him by the somewhat harsh judgment of "Camacho's Wedding," in the city where its composer's youth had been spent. From that time, in spite of early associations and dearest ties, Mendelssohn entertained a dislike to Berlin, with its court circle and its journal cliques. He conceived also an objection to writing for the

stage—an objection which was confirmed by his high, pure standard of excellence and by his disgust at every appeal to ignoble and base sentiment.

In 1826, when Mendelssohn was in his eighteenth year, he and his elder sister Fanny, who was, within her sphere, a remarkable musician, played to Moscheles, at that time revisiting Berlin, three recent compositions of Mendelssohn's, not merely full of promise, but full of poetry, novelty, and extraordinary skill, considering the youth of the composer. They were the *Overture to a Midsummer Night's Dream,* The Calm of the Sea and a Prosperous Voyage,* and the "Octett in E flat."

During the two following years Mendelssohn was a student of Berlin University, where he lightened his severe course of study by trying his hand at poetry, in writing his first German metrical version of Terence's "Andria," and venturing to send it to Goethe.

The influence of his friend Moscheles and of an attaché at the Prussian embassy, London, drew Mendelssohn to England, which he visited in 1829, when he was twenty years of age. He had enjoyed the benefit and delight of travel before then, but this was his first independent excursion, unattended by his father or any guiding Mentor. Mendelssohn was fit to make it without danger to himself or alarm to his friends, since, while possessing what are often considered such great social temptations that they are made the excuse for the most lamentable downfalls, while young, well born, wealthy, handsome, gay, witty, and even marvellously endowed, he could with God's

* "For a whole year I hardly did anything else," he said, of the "Midsummer Night's" overture; and certainly he had not wasted his time.—FERDINAND HILLER, *Macmillan's Magazine.*

help, both then and in more mature years, wear, like his royal countryman, "the white flower of a blameless life."

He was God-fearing and virtuous, as he was gifted and gracious; "evil seemed to glance aside from him, temptation to get no hold of him," one of his many friends writes wonderingly; and Mendelssohn himself rebutted with half-touching, half-amusing, amazed indignation the warning of another friend against follies and vices, which the young man addressed had never learned to view save with horror and disgust.

There is little wonder that Mendelssohn's visit to London, and his subsequent tours in Scotland, in the English lake country, and Wales, were not only sources of great profit and enjoyment to him; they were opportunities for his forming new and worthy friendships, and he could ever afterwards recall the circumstances with satisfaction and delight. It was at this time that the London Philharmonic Society, with which Mendelssohn was to be so much connected, had the honour of giving the first public testimony, which he never forgot, to the merits of the new German composer. At the concerts of the Society for that year, Mendelssohn played Mozart's "Concerto in D minor," with extempore cadences, and his own "Symphony in C minor," and was hailed as a true successor of Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven.* On midsummer-night, at the benefit of Drouet, the flute-player, there was given, as an acceptable tribute from the last youthful German master of sweet sounds to the world and England's dramatist, Shakspeare, the *Overture to a Midsummer's Night Dream*, which was so well appreciated that it was given again on another occasion during the same summer.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

Happy and honourable as this stay of Mendelssohn in England was, it was not without a disaster. He was accidentally thrown from a cab, received an injury to one knee, and was detained a prisoner for some weeks at the very time that he was proposing to return to Germany and to his expectant family. He employed the interval, robbing it of its tediousness, in a manner characteristic of the man, and of his warm, loyal domestic affections. He wrote a little opera, called in German *Heimkehr aus der Fremde* ("Return from among Strangers"), and afterwards performed in English as *Stranger and Son*, and had it ready to carry back with him, in order to use it in the celebration of the silver wedding of his father and mother. He arrived at home in time, and had the pleasure of conducting the piece—surely to the most appreciative audience.

In the spring or summer of 1830 Mendelssohn, then twenty-one years of age, wrote his "Reformation Symphony," which was to be a great commemoration of the Reformation, and included "a remarkable elaboration of the chorale 'Eine feste Burg,'" said to have been sung by Luther as he was led to trial.* Of this Mendelssohn wrote specially to his sister Fanny, then married to M. Hensel, but still her brother Felix's greatest ally, since his younger brother Paul was to become a merchant like their father, and Rebecca, a mere girl, had less musical faculty than was possessed by her elder sister. Mendelssohn had not yet fixed on the name for the symphony, and was desirous of having Fanny's opinion, and that she should collect the opinions of others on such a choice of titles as "Reformation Symphony" (which was in the end selected), "Confession Symphony," "Symphony for a Church Festival,"

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

&c., &c. In another letter he shows how his mind returns to the subject, which had a real attraction for him; he mentions that a friend had made him a present of a copy of Luther's hymns, and that he was so struck by their power, that he intended to harmonize several of them during the next winter. "In pursuance of this plan," he declares, "I have nearly completed here the choral 'Aus tiefer Noth,' for four voices *a cappella;* and the Christmas hymn, 'Vom Himmel hoch,' is already in my head. I propose also arranging the following—'Ach Gott vom Himmel sieh darein,' 'Wir glauben all an einen Gott,' 'Verleih uns Frieden,' 'Mitten wir in Leben sind,' and, finally, 'Eine feste Burg.'"

Mendelssohn went in the end of 1830 to Italy, Switzerland, and France, and on his prolonged tour, with his stay in Rome, his published letters throw a charming light. Written, like Mozart's letters, to near and dear kindred, Mendelssohn's letters have the same frank spontaneity and affectionate confidences, with more than the same sparkle. But in other respects the letters are quite different. Mozart wrote almost entirely of his own affairs; his playfulness was purely personal and largely boyish. Music was his province: he had never learnt to go beyond it. Mendelssohn's letters are those of the young scholar, with an indefinitely widened intelligence and sympathy, who, while he is born a king of music, is a citizen of no mean rank in other kingdoms. One of the additional talents which he sedulously practised and sought to improve, and which was a source of great enjoyment to him in his wanderings, was that of drawing and sketching with precision and grace.

Mendelssohn's first resting-place was Weimar, where he

was again received by Goethe with special favour. To the "drowsy old lion," "the Jupiter Tonans," as he calls the great old German poet and philosopher, Mendelssohn played pieces by Bach, Haydn, and Mozart, leading the listener on, at his own request, through the different stages of musical progress, and explaining it as the playing proceeded, and as none was more qualified to explain and to illustrate. In return "the old man eloquent" conversed on every subject in heaven and earth. Goethe showed himself considerately anxious that his guest should have during his stay a variety of pleasures—the society of young people like himself, as well as the coveted company of his host. A bevy of Weimar beauties were invited to meet Mendelssohn, and at the same party, given by Goethe, where Mendelssohn had played the whole evening the "Concert Stück," the "Invitation à la Valse," and Weber's "Polonaise in C," with pieces of his own and his "Scotch Sonata," the entertainment was wound up, after Goethe had retired to rest at nine o'clock, by "all sorts of fun, dancing, and singing," according to a nightly custom, which lasted till midnight. Goethe had Mendelssohn's likeness taken to place among those of Goethe's friends, and as a parting remembrance he gave to the young man a sheet of the MS. of *Faust*, with the inscription below, "To my dear young friend F. M. B., mighty yet delicate master of the piano, a friendly souvenir of happy May-days in 1830.—J. W. von GOETHE."

From Munich, whence Mendelssohn sent a tender song to his ailing sister Fanny, in a letter which he ends by the assurance, "You know that I am always your own; and may it please God to bestow on you all that I hope and pray," he proceeded to Presburg, where he saw the

magnificent spectacle of the coronation of the Crown Prince of Austria as King of Hungary, and went on to Venice, Florence, and Rome. His letters are full of eloquent descriptions of scenery, pageants, pictures, with graphic, merry accounts of his adventures and misadventures. "Oh, Paul!" he addresses his commercially inclined brother, in an interjection on the common currency difficulty of travellers, "do you mean to say that you understand the Schein Gulden, N. W. Gulden, heavy Gulden, light Gulden, and the devil and his grandmother's Gulden?"

Of Presburg, on this occasion, he writes, "Hungary, with her magnates, her high dignitaries, her oriental luxury, side by side with her barbarism, is to be seen here; and the streets offer a spectacle which to me is most novel and striking. We really seem here to approach closer to the East. The miserably obtuse peasants or serfs, the troops of gipsies, the equipages and retainers of the nobles overloaded with gold and gems (for the grandees themselves are only visible through the closed windows of their carriages), then the singularly bold national physiognomy, the yellow hue, the long moustaches, the soft foreign idioms—all this makes the most motley impression in the world."* He details in the liveliest manner the tricks of his vetturino, whom he had the greatest difficulty in not belabouring; indeed, he did so more than once, when the vetturino assured the traveller gravely that their snail's creeping was a capital pace, and Mendelssohn had no means of proving the contrary.

He makes us share in his delight in approaching Italy; in seeing the women with roses in their hair, the indolent,

* "Mendelssohn's Letters" (Lady Wallace's translation).

picturesque attitudes of the Sunday groups at the inn-doors, the scattered cypresses, which only enhanced the general effect. He infects us with his enthusiasm as he enters Venice, sails on its waters, views its palaces and churches, and gazes entranced on Titian's "Assumption," &c., &c. At Florence there is more beauty; indeed, "everything is beautiful and glorious," especially since Mendelssohn has received letters from home, after an interval which has tried his home-loving heart; but he sees they were all well and going on as usual, and thinking of him, and so he feels happy again, and can see everything and enjoy everything; and thus he has this word-picture of Florence—"There are villas on every height, and decorated old walls, above which clusters of roses and aloes, vines above the flowers, and above the vines the olive leaves; the pointed cypress, and the flat-topped pine are all sharply defined against the sky; then handsome chiselled faces, busy life on the roads on every side, and the blue city down the distant vale."

Perhaps few lives could be happier than young Mendelssohn's during that winter in Rome, when he lived in the Piazza de Spagna, which all day long enjoyed the warm sun, in an apartment on the first floor, where there were a good Viennese grand piano, on the table some portraits of Palestrina, Allegri, &c., &c., along with scores of their works, and a Latin Psalm-book, from which he was to compose his "Non nobis." His landlord had been a captain in the French army, and possessed a daughter with a splendid contralto voice. Above him lived a Prussian captain, with whom he talked politics.

Mendelssohn was a thoroughly good fellow; in all his vivacity "there was not a grain of mockery." "He

delighted to admire and venerate; from the first to the last he had an unaffected relish for and enjoyment in the society of those older than himself, while he retained the merriment of a child and his sympathy with childhood." "Everything that was good and beautiful in art and in nature, no matter what the form and order, no matter what the climate, no matter what the period, was not so much seen and studied as possessed by him."—(*Chorley.*) He worked hard, was very happy in his work, and happier still in the conviction that "music progresses onwards, as sure to pierce through as the sun; if mists still prevail, it is merely a sign that the spring-time has not yet come, but come again it must and will." For relaxation, not only his eye for the beautiful was never satiated, but his keen cultured interest never wearied in the classic and mediæval remains on every side of him, to which was subjoined his appreciation of modern political changes, and the fact that the Pope died in the course of the winter, and that Mendelssohn witnessed the ceremonies of his funeral, and shared in the excitement over the election of his successor. In addition he had on every side of him the congenial society of Bunsen and his family, of the sculptor Thorwaldsen, of the painters Bendemann and Horace Vernet. At Bunsen's house Palestrina's music was performed every Monday evening; after the "black-frocked Abbati" had done their part, Mendelssohn improvised until "they clapped their hands like mad; and Bunsen declared that I had astonished the clergy." To Thorwaldsen Mendelssohn would play in the mornings, while the old sculptor kneaded his brown clay in harmony with the music.

Neither was there wanting lighter associations suited

to Mendelssohn's years. He could tell his sisters how Madame Vernet and her daughter (the beautiful short-lived wife of Paul Delaroche), and another French lady, were followed and accompanied in their evening walks and admired by "us Germans;" while a background was formed of "haggard painters, with terrific beards," who smoked tobacco on Mount Pincio, whistled to their huge dogs, and enjoyed the sunset in their own way. He could give every particular of a ball where he had danced with a degree of zeal which he had never known before, as he had given a hint to the master of the ceremonies, and the galop had been allowed to continue for more than half an hour, with "young Mendelssohn," as he himself declared, in his element, and pleasantly conscious that he was dancing in the Piazzo Albani, Rome, having for his partner the prettiest girl in it, "according to the verdict of competent judges (Thorwaldsen, Vernet, &c.)." He relates with great glee and triumph how he made her acquaintance. He had been at Tarlonia's first ball, not dancing, as he knew none of the ladies. Thorwaldsen had tapped him on the shoulder, and said, "So you also are admiring the English beauty; I am quite dazzled;" and in the same breath had come a torrent of French words from a little, thin man, with stiff grey hair and the ribbon of the Legion of Honour, who could be no other than Horace Vernet, "Mais où est-elle donc, cette petite Anglaise? Ma femme m'a envoyé pour la regarder, per Bacco!" Finally, through some mutual friends, Mendelssohn had chanced to be invited to spend the evening with an English party which happened to consist of the young lady and her friends; and so he became in circumstances to be the envied partner of the belle of the Roman season. Withal

Mendelssohn preserved undimmed by absence his simple, pure home affections and interests. He writes punctually to congratulate his father on the recurring of a family festival, and forwards the lines of music which entered his head as he came into the room—the sun shining on his father's birthday. He proposes to finish the piece of work with which he is engaged as a present to his father on the special occasion, and affirms that, if he writes the 11th of December under the title, when he takes up the sheets he will feel as if he were about to place them in his father's hands. He anticipates that the long, animated letter, full of descriptions of all that could occupy and entertain his father, must reach home on Christmas-day, for which he was to send each of his people a present that would reach them on yet another gala—the anniversary of his father and mother's silver wedding-day. He fondly and carefully chronicled these days, remarking that he did not know whether to imagine himself with his father then, wishing him all possible happiness, or to fancy himself arriving with his letter at Christmas, and his mother not letting him pass through the room where the Christmas-tree was being got ready. He forwarded to his sister Rebecca his sketch-book, and to his sister Fanny the music which he had been composing. To the latter he has also a kind letter, assuring her that he has remembered her birth-day, and prepared for it a psalm for chorus and orchestra, "Non nobis, Domine," which he is to find an opportunity of sending her along with a quantity of new music in the following week. He treats her to a little wise, tender banter on her regret at being unable to compose. "Per Bacco! if you had the inclination you certainly have sufficient genius to compose; and if you have no desire to do so, why grumble

so much? If I had a baby to nurse, I certainly should not write any scores; and as I have composed 'Non nobis,' I cannot, unluckily, carry my nephew about in my arms. But, to speak seriously, your child is scarcely six months old yet, and you cannot think of anything but Sebastian* (not Bach!). Be thankful that you have him. Music only retreats when there is no longer a place for her; and I am not surprised that you are not an unnatural mother. However, you have my best wishes on your birthday for all that your heart desires; so I may as well wish you half-a-dozen melodies into the bargain, not that this will be of much use."

Mendelssohn's great work at this time was his "Isles of Fingal," or, as he named it at first, the "Einsame Insel" (Lonely Island).† It was a remembance and means of preservation of the vivid, lasting impression made upon him by his brief sojourn among the wild, sad scenery of the islands of the north-west Highlands of Scotland.

The spring in the soft south, with its loads of violets and anemones, was only less alluring to him than the short summer, with its pathos, of the grey, stern north. His intimacy with artists in Rome, if it did not increase his homage to nature, certainly did not lessen his love of art, in which he showed a persistent preference for the magnificent pictures of Titian and a great admiration of Guido's "Aurora." Naturally, he frequented the studios of all the noted German painters then in Rome, including Cor-

* The name of the child.—*Lady Wallace.*

† "He told me that not only had its form and colour been suggested to him by the sight of Fingal's Cave, but that the first few bars, containing the principal subject, had actually occurred to him on the spot."—FERDINAND HILLER, *Macmillan's Magazine.*

nelius, Koch, and Overbeck; but with none of these masters did he seem to have more intimate relations than with the French battle-painter, Horace Vernet. Mendelssohn has a characteristic sketch of an evening at the Vernet Villa Medici, where, after a hubbub of boys playing at soldiers and young men singing a chorus, Louisa Vernet danced the saltarella with her father, and, when she was forced to stop, "snatched up a tambourine, and played it with the utmost spirit," supplying the subject for "a superb picture;" and the same evening Carl Vernet, the grandfather of the family, danced a quadrille, "making so many *entrechats*, and varying his steps so gracefully, that it is a sad pity he should actually be seventy-two years of age."

While it was yet early spring Mendelssohn shared in "the pomp, brilliance, and animation," surpassing "all that imagination can conceive," of the ceremonies and fêtes in connection with the coronation of Pope Gregory XVI.; and at the subsequent carnival, the young composer drove on the roaring, reeling Corso, invested in *confetti*, and pelted and was pelted with the best. About this time his version of Goethe's ballad of the "Erste Walpurgis Nacht," or Witches' Saturnalia, was taking shape in his mind.

The Holy Week, with its grand old sacred music by Allegri and Palestrina, ended Mendelssohn's stay in Rome. Naples was "indescribably beautiful" to him, and during his stay there he chanced to see an eruption of Vesuvius. "Even Vesuvius gets up a spectacle for him," Goethe commented. On quitting Naples, and having completed his cantata of the "Walpurgis Nacht," Mendelssohn writes to his sister Rebecca, can she not send him some

pretty verses, old or new, gay or gloomy, and he will mould them into the compass of her voice; he is sure that she wants something new to sing, and he wants something to work upon, during his journey, at the inns. Thus the unappeasable thirst for work, which continued to pursue him, had already taken possession of him.

From Italy Mendelssohn went by Milan, where he had the great pleasure of encountering a son of Mozart's, to Switzerland, revisiting scenes which had haunted him from the time that he had seen them last, when he was twelve years of age, and the Mendelssohn family had taken a tour in Switzerland. The dreams which had in the interval so dwelt on the savage moors, great bleak hill ranges, and stormy seas of the Hebrides returned to their first love in gazing awe-struck and spell-bound on the snowy mountain-tops, vast glittering glaciers, and profound sombre ravines of the Alps. He concludes fervent praise of Switzerland with the devout words, "I thank God for having created so much that is beautiful." Some of his Swiss letters contain, besides lines and chords of music, clever pen-and-ink sketches of the scenes which delighted him so much; among which he read anew Schiller's "Wilhelm Tell" with fresh appreciation and intense enjoyment.

At Munich, on his way home, Mendelssohn played before the Court, and gave a concert, the performance including his *Midsummer Night's Dream.* He received a commission for an opera from the Munich theatre, before proceeding to Paris, which was his next place of destination; and he took up at this time an idea, which an opinion of his mother's sanctioned, and which was long in favour with him, though with his halting inclination to

stage music it was never executed, except in a few fragments —to write an opera on Shakspeare's play of the *Tempest.*

Mendelssohn was at first disappointed in musical Paris. The concerts in the Conservatoire threatened to fail, the Opera Comique was bankrupt, the Great Opera only gave little operas. Even he himself had felt unmusical, confessing that he had suffered an attack of musical spleen, "when all music, and more especially one's own, becomes actually hateful. I felt thoroughly unmusical, and did nothing but eat and sleep, and that revived me." With regard to this mode of revival Mr. Haweis refers to Mendelssohn's extreme excitability of temperament which, on one—and that not a very extraordinary occasion, brought him to the brink of delirium, from which he was recovered by "a profound sleep of twelve hours." "It was by these sleeps," Mr. Haweis adds, "often almost like death in their silent torpor," that nature recreated a frame constantly overtaxed to the extreme limits of endurance by nervous excitement. His appetite also never failed him; he could eat almost at any time, and, according to his own playful admission, to any extent." *

* "In the midst of the manifold occupations and social musings which he gladly took part in, and which he graced by his talent and his brilliant conversation, there would come days of exhaustion, even of oppression. At such times visits from his friends, foremost among whom were David and Dr. Schleinitz, would always do him good. Sometimes, also, he would amuse himself with doing little water-colour sketches; or he would read some poem of Goethe,—for instance, 'Hermann and Dorothea,' or 'Iphigenie.' The first of these he was especially fond of. . . . . But sleep was always his best cure. Several times I found him lying on the sofa before dinner, ready dressed, having been asleep for hours; after which he would awake with a capital appetite. A quarter of an hour after, he would say, with the air of a spoiled child, 'I am still quite tired,' would lie down, saying

The social life of Paris, with its artificiality and whirl, suited Mendelssohn ill. Here is a specimen of a week of it. "To-night, Bohrer's; to-morrow, a fête with all the violin *gamins* of the Conservatoire; next day, Rothschild's; Tuesday, the Société des Beaux Arts; Wednesday, my Octett at the Abbé Burdin's; Thursday, my Octett at Madame Kiéné's; Friday, a concert at Erard's; Sunday, a concert at Léo's; and, lastly, on Monday—laugh if you choose —my Octett is to be performed in a church at a funeral mass in commemoration of Beethoven." Mendelssohn got so far into the spirit of the gaiety, and he enjoyed the performance of his *Midsummer Night's Dream* at one of the concerts of the Conservatoire; but two severe shocks recalled him from the probable temporary waste of his powers. He heard the news of Goethe's death, which he regarded justly as a great blow to his country, and, with the visitation of cholera in Paris, he himself was struck down, and only recovered after a sharp illness. He proceeded from Paris to London, whence he wrote thankfully, May, 1832, "I cannot describe to you the happiness of these first weeks here. As from time to time every evil seems to accumulate, as it did in Paris during my winter there, when I lost some of my most beloved friends, never felt quite at home, and at last became very ill; so the reverse sometimes occurs, and thus it is in this charming country, where I find old friends again, and feel myself happy and among well-wishers, and enjoy in the fullest measure the

how delicious it was, stretch himself out, and in a few minutes be fast asleep again. 'He can go on in that way for two days,' Cecile (Madame Mendelssohn) said to me, 'and then he is fresher than ever.' Nature supplied him with the best cure, but unhappily it could not remain so always."—FERDINAND HILLER, *in Macmillan's Magazine.*

sensation of returning health. Moreover it is warm, the lilacs are in bloom, and music is going on: only imagine how pleasant all this is!" Then he proceeds to describe his enthusiastic reception at the rehearsal at the Philharmonic Society, when, on his leaving his box, he was hailed by a cry from the orchestra of, "There is Mendelssohn!" followed by shouting and clapping of hands, all of which was precious to him because, as he says, "It showed me that the musicians loved me, and rejoiced at my coming; and I cannot tell you what a glad feeling that was." Indeed, as few foreign artists met in England with a readier, heartier reception than that accorded to Mendelssohn, so few foreign artists, while loving their own countries with faithful patriotism, have felt for England a warmer and more generous appreciation than that entertained for it by Felix Mendelssohn.

At one of the concerts of the Philharmonic Society this year, Mendelssohn's "Overture to the Hebrides" was given. Of the performance of the latter he writes home that "it sounded very quaint, among a variety of Rossini's pieces." Writing of this favourite composition of his from Paris, he had declared it unfinished, and stated, "The middle movement forte in D major is very stupid, and the whole modulations savour more of counterpoint than of train-oil and sea-gulls and salt fish; and it ought to be exactly the reverse." Mendelssohn's music was highly wrought, and, like Beethoven and other great masters, he was often unwilling to publish his productions, because he desired them to pass constantly through further processes of sifting, strengthening, and refining.

In England Mendelssohn heard tidings which always distressed him to a painful extent—those of the death of an

old friend. In this case the loss was that of his early master, Zelter.

Mendelssohn returned to Germany with a commission to compose three new works for the Philharmonic Society's concerts of 1833, for which he was to be paid one hundred pounds. With regard to the payments received by him, and what was believed his independence of them from his father's wealth, Mr. Chorley points out in his sketch of Mendelssohn appended to Lady Wallace's translation of the composer's letters, that it is clear from these letters (which first told the fact to the world) that Mendelssohn was in fact left, till the decease of his father, to the resources of his art; and Mr. Chorley claims with justice, as a proof of Mendelssohn's natural unselfishness and generosity, that this circumstance, in combination as it was with his great early popularity, never made him inconsiderate or grasping in his demands. So far was he from greed of money, and so much did he work from a higher motive, that he was contented with a modest and reasonable material remuneration for his work. In addition, the amount of help which he gave to others, with a good humour and gaiety that doubled the obligation, will never be fully known.

Back in Germany, Mendelssohn was not only occupied with his own engagements, he was eagerly conducting the first of his ultimately successful attempts to render Bach's Passion music as popular as it deserved to be in Germany. Mendelssohn tried, by his friends' urgent advice, for the Directorship of the Singing Academy in Berlin, and failed—another offence for him to chronicle against the city. It was the signal defect of his fine and winning character, that he grew so far spoiled with success and appreciation,

that contradiction and disappointment became always more intolerable to him, and that with his keen susceptibilities unchecked, and liable to make havoc of his original manliness, he developed, in place of outgrowing, a tendency to one-sided, violent impressions which grew more and more intense—a stumbling-block and torment to him. Hating the most distant approach to falsehood and meanness, and preserving his own lofty standard of excellence, he waxed utterly intolerant of all who, under any temptation, lapsed from it, or who even ventured to differ from him on its essentials. His restlessness also increased with years, and with the restlessness came, in the room of his old geniality, the irritability of a brain and heart worn by over-labour and emotion.

But Mendelssohn was still in his youthful prime when he came back to England in 1833, in his twenty-fifth year, bringing with him his three works for the Philharmonic Society—his aria of "Infelice," Overture in C, usually called the "Trumpet Overture," and his "Symphony in A Major," which commemorated his first impressions of Italy, as his "Hebrides" commemorated his first impressions of Ultima Thule.

These masterpieces were given at the Philharmonic Society's concerts for the season, after which Mendelssohn left England in order to conduct a musical festival at Düsseldorf, and there he planned his overture to *Melusine* (founded on the German tale), which, however, was first performed in England at one of the Philharmonic concerts, where, in spite of its merits, it did not meet with the sympathetic reception awarded to his earlier works. At Düsseldorf Mendelssohn was offered and accepted the directorship of the singing academy of the theatre, for

which he set to music *Der Standhafte Prinz*, a translation or adaptation of one of Calderon's plays. According to M. Fétis, Mendelssohn's directorship was disturbed by his contentions with Ferdinand Ries*—the pupil and friend of Beethoven, who, from his position as director of the choir in the Academy at Aix-la-Chapelle, was entitled to a share in conducting the musical festivals of the Rhine. M. Fétis writes of the two directors, as having conducted their feud with more zeal than mutual respect. Further, with regard to Mendelssohn, who was much the younger man of the two, and who, with all his cultivation and experience, laboured under nearly as great a disadvantage of immature age as that which had beset Weber at Breslau, M. Fétis states that from the first dissensions broke out between him (young Mendelssohn) and the musicians and amateurs of the Rhenish provinces, and that it was in consequence of these disagreements that his engagement with the theatre was dissolved by common consent in 1836. A word may be said here of Mendelssohn as a musical director and conductor. In one sense and to one propitious style of orchestra he was perfect; but when he encountered a stupid or refractory orchestra, particularly towards the close of his life, not only his severity, but his irritability became a trial alike to himself and the performers. Mr. Haweis quotes, with regard to Mendelssohn as a conductor, after referring to these instances of irritability, "that the way in which he was able to infuse himself into the band was little short of magical, and at times he would

* Ries, the pianist, born at Rome in 1784, who was long settled in London, and whose operas of *Die Rauberbraut* and the *Sorceress* have both been played in London, while his pianoforte "Concerto in C Sharp Minor" has been much admired.

leave off in a kind of trance, and listen with his head a little on one side, quite rapt with delight at the band itself having become Mendelssohn, and therefore hardly needing Mendelssohn's baton for the time."

While he was still at Düsseldorf, he received the offer of a professorship in the University of Leipsic. He refused it, dreading to acquire and to disseminate pedantry in his profession; but he agreed to become conductor of the subscription concerts in Leipsic—the city which was thenceforth to become closely associated with his name.

The death of Mendelssohn's father, inflicting a severe blow on the composer, happened in 1835. In 1836, at the summer musical festival at Düsseldorf, Mendelssohn, then in his twenty-eighth year, brought out his great oratorio of *St. Paul*. It was highly appreciated, and was performed in England three times within the next two years—the first performance being in Liverpool, the second in London, and the third in Birmingham—when Mendelssohn himself came to conduct the orchestra, bringing with him his "Concerto in D Minor." Mendelssohn was much with the Moscheles before the Birmingham festival, to which Moscheles accompanied him. "The same hearty, cheerful, delightful old friend as ever: in a word, he is a model man." Mrs. Moscheles bears her testimony to Mendelssohn's merits. "His conversation is as lively as it is interesting. He sympathizes enthusiastically with Moscheles's studies," so that it was not before midnight that he paid any heed to the mistress of the house's third summons to the two friends to be off to bed and rest. He romped with his little godson, Felix Moscheles. He spoke with much happiness of his wife. ("The portrait he showed us makes

her very pretty, and, according to him, she must be an angel," writes Mrs. Moscheles.)

In 1836, Mendelssohn had been in Frankfort, relieving a sick friend from the duty of conducting the Cecilia Vocal Society there; and early in 1837, when he was twenty-eight years of age, he had married a young Frankfort lady, Mademoiselle Cecilia Jean-Renaud. We have this description of Felix Mendelssohn's wife, written by Moscheles to his wife, "I have been very heartily received in this house. His wife is very charming, very unassuming, and childlike, but not in my judgment a perfect beauty, because she is a blonde. Her mouth and nose are like Sontag's. Her way of speaking is pleasing and simple; her German is Frankforty, therefore not pure; she said naïvely at dinner, 'I speak too slowly for my Felix, and he so quickly that I don't always understand him.' She is so simple in her ways that she often got up to hand us something." Mrs. Moscheles adds, when she forms the same acquaintance on a later occasion, "At last my ardent wish is fulfilled: I have learnt to know the charming and beautiful Cécile; . . . one must congratulate the excitable effervescent Mendelssohn: he has met with a wife so gentle, so exquisitely feminine, they are perfectly matched." *

In the following year Mendelssohn gave a series of four historic concerts at Leipsic, pursuing more fully the plan

* "Every one knows how happy Mendelssohn was at home. His beautiful, gentle, sensible wife spread a charm over the whole household, and reminded one of a Rafael Madonna. Little Carl, the eldest child, amused us intensely with his first attempts at speaking. Cécile's family, charming people, were in and out all day, and the whole atmosphere was a sort of rivalry of amiability and affection. It was altogether a period of happiness which falls to the share of few mortals."—FERDINAND HILLER, *in Macmillan's Magazine.*

which Goethe had asked Mendelssohn to follow with him, of giving in succession the masterpieces of the great composers, with their individuality of age as well as of character and distinctions of style. Mendelssohn wrote much of his best chamber music about this time.

In 1840, Mendelssohn, then thirty-one years of age, was commissioned to assist in the commemoration of the fourth centenary of the invention of printing, (when a statue of Gutenberg was to be unveiled at Leipsic,) by a composition worthy of Germany and its last great composer. He produced his "Hymn of Praise," which, like Beethoven's "Choral Symphony," united the strength and beauty of instrumental and vocal music. He proposed to make it one of a series, and so named it the "First Sinfonia Cantata," but he did not carry out his intention, and so it remains alone, a noble monument to Mendelssohn, as well as to Gutenberg. The composer did for it what he was so much accustomed to do, and held so necessary for his great works, that his kindred and executors have declined to produce to the world, after Mendelssohn's death, those fruits of his genius which have not these finishing touches; he re-wrote the whole, changing, abridging, and interpolating as his judgment told him the perfecting of his work demanded. In the instance of the "Hymn of Praise," Mendelssohn added, on second thoughts, the famous passage, "Watchman, will the Night soon pass?" * When the "Hymn of Praise" was given at a concert in Leipsic, the King of Saxony commanded its repetition, and summoned the composer to receive the

* Whilst the public sat listening in stolid indifference, ... the chorale and song, "Watchman, will the Night soon pass?" moved me even to tears.—MOSCHELES.

king's thanks. In addition, Mendelssohn was appointed Court Kapell-Meister, while the University of Leipsic conferred on him the degree of Ph.D., and the King of Prussia bestowed on him the Order of Merit. The King of Prussia's acknowledgment of Mendelssohn's genius went a great deal further. The sovereign proposed for the composer, in 1841, the post of "General Superintendent of Sacred Music throughout the kingdom, and director of the great musical concerts in Berlin." This post Mendelssohn accepted, on the condition that he should retain his directorship of the Leipsic concerts, which he had raised to a high degree of excellence. Mendelssohn came to England in the summer of 1840, to conduct his "Hymn of Praise" at the Birmingham Musical Festival,* and brought with him several preludes and fugues for the organ.

Moscheles and Mr. Chorley accompanied Mendelssohn back to Germany, and they appear to have formed a joyous holiday-party. In the Dover mail coach they found a fourth traveller asleep. "What shall we do with him when he wakes up?" was the question. "Kill him; that's the only way," was the answer. At that moment the sleeper stirred, and Moscheles sought to turn aside his attention by breaking in with the following words in English, "And afterwards she said she never would have that man for her husband"—a sentence which from that moment became a proverb amongst the party. "Mendelssohn, like the people in Homer, laughed through tears, and the fit was contagious."—*Moscheles's Life.*

* On the occasion of Mendelssohn's conducting the "Lobgesang," "Song of Praise," in Birmingham, the audience rose involuntarily, as at the performance of Handel's "Hallelujah" chorus.

In anticipation of the first introduction of Moscheles by Mendelssohn to his wife, after their marriage of several years, the two friends "had much confidential talk." "We have communicated to one another many details of our courtship days, as to the where and how we came to pop the question, ending by declaring that we were thoroughly satisfied with our choices." I have already quoted Moscheles's pleasant impression of his friend's wife. Indeed, of Mendelssohn's domestic happiness there could be no doubt, and that in the bright light of his own hearth the composer was able to throw off all his cares; for Moscheles writes expressly, *apropos* of some worry of his own, "I intend, however, to be as fresh and lively as Mendelssohn, who jumps about with his children. 'Cécile, you must venture on singing a little Lied to Moscheles, and let him accompany you,' Mendelssohn, with a husband's fondness, suggested in the middle of his own masterly performance one evening. "She made the same excuses that certain people always do, and then sang the old German Lied and two others: her voice is small, but her intonation correct." After speaking of Mendelssohn's Carl (his eldest son) as "an excellent, lively, clever boy," Moscheles writes down the following words, which gives one a faint idea of the music of a Russian post-horn signal, which the boy sang in a duet with his father:—

"Da-da, da-da-da,
Karl, Felix,
Karl, Felix, Karl." *

* "Mendelssohn's house was pleasantly situated, with a nice open look-out from the front upon the Leipsic boulevard and the St. Thomas's school and church, once the sphere of the great Bach's labours. The arrangement of the rooms was as follows:—First, a

In 1843 Mendelssohn's successful exertions to revive the name and fame of his great old predecessor Bach throughout Germany, and especially in the scene of his labours, were crowned by the inauguration of a statue to Bach at Leipsic.

To meet the King of Prussia's wish to revive the Greek drama, a wish with which Mendelssohn's classical education and taste enabled him fully to sympathize, the composer entered on a new course of study and production, the fruits of which were the music written by Mendelssohn in eleven days for the *Antigone* of Sophocles, which had been adapted to the German stage by Tieck, and which was played at Potsdam in 1841, and the music for the *Œdipus in Colonus*, brought out in 1845. Scholarly opinions have differed widely on the success or non-success of these attempts at restoration; but it seems certain that the severe simplicity of ancient art could awaken as true a

sort of hall, with the dining-table and a few chairs; to the right of this a large sitting-room and some bedrooms; to the left my friend's study, with his piano. Opening out of this was a fine large drawing-room, which, however, was robbed of some of its natural elegance by the bed which had been put there for me" (Ferdinand Hiller), "though this was counteracted by a piano, also put there for my use. Our way of life was regular and simple. At about eight we breakfasted on coffee and bread and butter. Butter Felix never ate, but broke his bread into his coffee like any school-boy, 'as he had been accustomed to do.' We dined at one, and though he despised butter, he always liked a glass of good wine, and we often had to try some special sort which he would produce with great delight, and swallow with immense satisfaction. We generally made quick work of our dinner; but in the evening, after supper, we used often to sit round the table for hours chatting (not smoking), unless we moved to the piano, which had been presented to Madame Mendelssohn by the directors of the Gewandhaus."—Ferdinand Hiller, *in Macmillan's Magazine.*

response in Mendelssohn as it awoke in Raphael, when the latter threw down his brushes and pallet to become the leader in the excavations of ancient Rome.

Between 1841 and 1842 Mendelssohn had a warning illness, the result, it is believed, of over-work; but it only caused him to celebrate his recovery by the composition of the "Symphony in A Minor," a second work in which he concentrated and idealized his recollections of Scotland. A pleasant story is told of the original dedication of this work. It is said that Mendelssohn's wife, after their marriage of four years, playfully reproached him with having written nothing in his manifold writings specially for her, when he had a blank volume bound and lettered with her name, and wrote in it this "chief of his instrumental compositions."* Eventually, however, the symphony was dedicated to our Queen, from whom the composer received many marks of favour and kindness.

It was played first at one of the Leipsic concerts, and in the summer of the same year at a concert of the Philharmonic Society in London, at which Mendelssohn was present, conducting his own work.

One of the most public-spirited and beneficial of Mendelssohn's disinterested and patriotic works was his establishment in 1843, with the support of the King of Saxony, of the Conservatorium, or great musical academy of Leipsic. Mendelssohn from the first took the most active charge of the institution, lavishing on it, with a disregard of consequences, his genius and stores of learning and experience, alike in the directorship of the academy and in the presidency over its classes. Well might Leipsic bestow on him in return the freedom of the city.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

With a curious wistful return to the perfecting of his youthful ideas which was a marked feature in the man's character and intellect, Mendelssohn's two next works were a reproduction of his *Erste Walpurgis Nacht*, and, after another summer spent in Switzerland, of his *Midsummer Night's Dream*. In the latter the idea was extended until it became the music of the entire drama of that English dramatist whose plays were dear to the heart of the German composer, after the *Faust* of his own Goethe. The King of Prussia suggested this fulfilment of a sketch, and had it first played at the palace of Potsdam in 1843. For the same royal master, in the same year, Mendelssohn wrote his overture and chorus to Victor Hugo's *Ruy Blas*, and a little later his overture and musical setting of Racine's *Athalie*.

In the middle of these works the death of Mendelssohn's mother broke one of his strongest remaining ties to Berlin, and the anguish of the wrench to the morbidly susceptible man gave an additional cause for the repugnance with which he had come to look on the Prussian capital, above all, as a place of residence.

About this time Mendelssohn edited and wrote a worthy organ part for Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, being much occupied with the work, and with his stern determination to clear Handel's original score from the imagined improvements of directors and performers.

He was in England fulfilling engagements with the Philharmonic Society in 1844, in which year the *Walpurgis Nacht* and the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, in their latest forms, were first played in England.

In 1845 Mendelssohn resolved to retire into private life, desiring to devote himself to composition, which he was

accustomed to pursue amidst many distractions. He resigned his office of General Director of Music at Berlin, retaining, however, his salary through the goodwill of the King.

But Mendelssohn had not retired for rest, or even reasonable relaxation. The first use of his leisure was to improve his amusement of playing on the viola, in addition to the piano and organ, and to write a violin concerto for an old playfellow, and a later fellow-labourer in the orchestra of the Leipsic concerts, M. David.

Mendelssohn's next undertaking was stupendous. He had engaged to write an oratorio for the coming Birmingham festival, and he had been working at it * during an autumn stay near Frankfort. In the middle of the work he suddenly resumed his directorship of the Leipsic concerts, and presided at a series of festivals at Liége, Aix-la-Chapelle, and Cologne; writing for the Liége festival his cantata, *Lauda Sion*. He was still in time with his engagement for Birmingham; and there, in August, 1846, when Mendelssohn was in his thirty-eighth year, the triumph of his life was accomplished, when his grandest oratorio, *Elijah*, was performed under its composer's direction with complete and splendid success. Re-studied and refined, after his usual fashion, *Elijah* was given a second time in England; and again, under its composer's guidance, by the Sacred Harmonic Society at Exeter Hall in the spring of 1847. The success at Birmingham was still

* "One evening I found Felix deep in the Bible. 'Listen,' he said; and then he read to me, in a gentle and agitated voice, the passage from the First Book of Kings, beginning with the words, 'And behold the Lord passed by.' 'Would not that be splendid for an oratorio?' he exclaimed; and it did become part of the *Elijah*."—FERDINAND HILLER, *in Macmillan's Magazine*.

surpassed by the success in London, when, to crown the musical world's enthusiasm, the Queen commanded the repetition of the oratorio, and was present at its performance, which was the occasion of her first visit to the concerts of the Sacred Harmonic Society.

It was fated that these achievements and honours were to precede the end of the great composer's brief span of existence here, as a glorious sunset closes a tender spring or superb autumn day. Mendelssohn had already made his last public appearance in his beloved city of Leipzic in conducting *St. Paul* there on the Good Friday of 1847; while his playing Beethoven's "Pianoforte Concerto in G" and an organ piece of Bach's at two of the Philharmonic concerts in the months of April and May of the same year, proved his last public performance in England. After Germany, of which Mendelssohn was a devoted son, he loved England; and, as it happened, it was in England that he heard the first clear note and the last resounding echo of his renown. On this last visit to England Mendelssohn had the gratification of playing privately to the Queen and the Prince Consort, from whom he had a very gracious reception. The interview contains a very pleasing incident. "He gave us an account of his visit to the Queen," writes Moscheles; "she had received him very graciously, and he was much pleased with her rendering of some of his songs, which he had accompanied; he had also played to the Queen and the Prince. She must have been pleased, for when he rose to depart, she thanked him, and said, 'You have given me so much pleasure; now what can I do to give you pleasure?' Mendelssohn deprecating, she insisting; so he candidly admitted that he had a wish, which only her Majesty could fulfil. He

himself, the head of a household, felt mightily interested in the Queen's domestic arrangements; in short, might he see the royal children in their royal nurseries? The Queen at once entered into the spirit of his request, and, in her most winning way, conducted him herself through the nurseries, all the while comparing notes with him on the homely subjects that had a special attraction for both."

Mendelssohn's health had been for some time giving way under the tremendous strain of work to which he had subjected it. He had been forbidden by his medical men, months before that last visit to England, to excite himself by playing in public. Some of his friends had remarked a great alteration in his temper and spirits. Mr. Haweis quotes from the "Reminiscences of Edward Devrient" on this point, "I became clearly conscious of a change that had come over the sources of his inner life. His blooming youthful joyousness had given place to a fretfulness, a satiety of all earthly things, which reflected everything back from the spirit of former days. Conducting concerts, everything that savoured of business, was an intolerable annoyance to him; he took no longer any pleasure in the Conservatorium; he gave over his pianoforte pupils; not one of the young people inspired him with any sympathy—he could not bear to see any of their compositions."

But Moscheles, who had just removed to Leipsic to join the Conservatorium, gives no support to this theory of Mendelssohn's utterly shattered condition; on the contrary, he thus describes what was fated to be Mendelssohn's last birthday:—"We and the Schunks had combined to celebrate Mendelssohn's birthday. The proceedings were opened by a capital comic scene between two lady's maids, acted in the Frankfort dialect, by Cécile and her sister (Madame

Schunk). Then came a charade on the word 'Gewandhaus;' Joachim adorned with a fantastic wig *à la Paganini*, played a hare-brained impromptu on the G string; the syllable 'Wand' was represented by the Pyramus and Thisbe wall scene from the *Midsummer Night's Dream;* for 'Haus,' Charlotte (Mrs. Moscheles) acted a scene which she had written herself, in which she is discovered knitting a blue stocking and soliloquizing on the foibles of female authoresses, advising them to attend to their domestic duties: by way of enforcing the moral she calls her cook; the cook was I myself, and my appearance in cap and dress was the signal for a general uproar. Mendelssohn was sitting on a large straw arm-chair which creaked under his weight as he rocked to and fro, and the room echoed with his peals of laughter. The whole word "Gewandhaus" was illustrated by a full orchestra, Mendelssohn's and my children playing on little drums and trumpets, Joachim leading with a toy violin, my Felix conducting *à la Jullien.* It was splendid." *

At the same time Moscheles speaks of Mendelssohn's being in a state of affectionate sympathy with the troubles of another, a statement which does not agree with any devouring personal misery. He was full of anxiety about his faithful servant Johann, who lay ill in his house. "Men-

* Another birthday joke of a similar description is recorded by Ferdinand Hiller. In it Hiller represented a Frankfort burgher come with his wife and daughter (Madame Mendelssohn and her sister) to procure, for the daughter, lessons on the pianoforte from the celebrated Mendelssohn in Leipsic. Mendelssohn was represented by his old friend David, wearing the very coat in which Mendelssohn was wont to sit at home, and caricaturing Mendelssohn's movements, manner of speaking, and finally his improvising in what was to the little party the most life-like and diverting manner.

delssohn," writes Moscheles, "daily visited the sick-room and read aloud to him; he tended him to the hour of his death, and sincerely lamented his loss." Mrs. Moscheles exclaims of the Mendelssohns, "What a happy household it is! The abundant means at his command are never squandered upon outward show, but judiciously spent on a well-regulated, comfortable household . . . .; they, like ourselves, love to welcome friends or interesting guests cordially, but without ceremony."

But Mendelssohn was soon to be struck down by the news of the sudden death of Madame Hensel, that dear sister Fanny, the early companion of his studies, and the friend and confidant of his maturer years. This death, like the other deaths in his family, occurred in Berlin, and was the last calamity which that city held for him. He was at Frankfort when the event happened; and so great was his prostration from grief, that his friends in alarm removed him in succession to Baden-Baden and Unterlaken in the endeavour to restore his strength.

Mr. Chorley in writing of Mendelssohn's playing on the organ—the instrument he preferred—gives the details of his last organ improvisation as an incident of this period. "The place was the hamlet church of Ringennberg, by the side of the Lake of Brienz, inaccessible save from the water, and only to be reached by steps in the rock overgrown with ivy, moss, and maidenhair; the organ was a poor little instrument built by a Vallaisan maker. It seemed, however, as if the poet's spirit gave it power, and voice, and grandeur; while he sat there for the pleasure of one or two friends, exciting himself by his own performance—chain after chain of lofty thoughts and noble modulations unfolding themselves, till the confined space and

limited means under his grasp were forgotten in the triumphant exercise of that art which, as Milton's song, brings—

'All heaven before the eyes.'

He had been almost tempted to pass on to Fribourg, to play upon Mooser's famous organ, but the weather prevented him. 'Winter,' he said, 'was coming, and he had better draw homewards:' a few weeks later, he was dead." On seeing Mendelssohn on his return from Switzerland, Moscheles writes, "In mind dear Felix is the same as ever, but physically he seems altered; he is aged, weakened, and his walk is less elastic than before; but to see him at the piano, or hear him talk about art and artists, he is all life and fire."

Mendelssohn was not to recover his sister's death. He tried to master his sorrow by a very fever of work: accordingly those few months were not the least productive of his wonderfully productive life. The first cry of his stricken heart was uttered in the "Violin Quartett in F Minor," which is described as so full of anguish that it "would be painful but for its all-surpassing beauty."* "The passionate character of the whole, and the mournful key, seem to me an expression of his deeply agitated mind; he is still suffering and in sorrow for the loss of his sister." —(*Moscheles.*)

He worked at his new oratorio of *Christus*, of which four portions were afterwards printed. The *Lorelei*, an opera which he also left unfinished, was another occupation. He took up once more the old thought of working out Shakspeare's *Tempest* as an opera. He busied himself

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

with the education of his children. But an arresting hand was about to be laid on him and his multifarious work. By dint of it, he had grown almost cheerful again in his family and among his friends; yet "he would speak to them of his own approaching departure with a presentiment which bystanders interpreted as merely over-wrought feeling, but which would seem to argue that he was visited by warnings of dangerous malady" (*Chorley*); and after his return to Leipsic, a short visit to Berlin, with the blank that the place presented, and all that it recalled, caused him to mourn afresh.

On the 9th October, 1847, Mendelssohn wrote his "Night Song" (No. 6 of op. 71), which was his last composition. On the same day "Mendelssohn came to see us," writes Moscheles; "we watched him as he walked slowly and languidly through the garden on his way to our house. My wife felt much concerned, and, in answer to her inquiry after his health, he replied, 'How am I? Rather shady' (*grau in grau*). She assured him that a walk and the fine weather would do him good; so we—Charlotte and I and our Felix—went to the Rosenthal, and certainly during our strolls he became so fresh and animated, that we forgot his previous words." . . . . "Talking of Cécile's (Madame Mendelssohn's) birthday, he told us of a mantle he had bought her for a present; he had a second and priceless gift in store for her, for when he and Klingemann had made a tour in Scotland together, they both joined in keeping a diary, Klingemann jotting down their adventures in verse, Mendelssohn illustrating them. These fugitive pages, arranged and bound, were to be presented to his wife; but alas! he had already been attacked with deadly illness before the next day dawned. We parted

about one o'clock in the most cheerful mood. That very afternoon, however, Felix was taken very ill in Frau Frege's house: he had gone thither to persuade her to sing in the next performance of his *Elijah*. She had been singing to him, and he had been much moved, and had told her how melancholy the sight of his sister's unchanged rooms in Berlin had made him; but he added, "I have indeed so much to be thankful for, Cécile is so well, and little Felix too" (his youngest son, who was often out of health). She was about to sing to him from his *Elijah*, and left the room to order lamps. On her return she discovered him in the next room on a sofa complaining that his hands were cold and stiff, and saying that he really felt too ill for music. On his return home, his wife found him in the corner of the sofa, still with the same tale of coldness and stiffness in his hands. The next day violent pain in the head set in, but still the true nature of his illness was not apprehended. He was able to see his friends, and talked cheerfully of conducting *Elijah* at Vienna. In a few more days, however, to the distress of all, apoplexy declared itself, and attack followed on attack till it left him unconscious. "From nine o'clock in the evening," Moscheles gives his account of the last night, "we expected every moment would be the last. A light seemed to hover over his features, but the struggle for life became feebler and fainter. Cécile in floods of tears kneeled at his pillow. Paul Mendelssohn, David, Schleinitz, and I (Moscheles), in deep and silent prayer, surrounded the death-bed. As his breathing gradually became slower and slower, my mind involuntarily recurred to Beethoven's funeral march—

'Sulla morte d'un Eroë,'

to that passage where he seems to depict the hero as he is breathing his last, the sands of life gradually running out. . . . . At twenty-four minutes past nine, he expired with a deep sigh."

"On the 5th, I went in the evening to Bendemann," Mr. Haweis quotes from Devrient, "where I hoped to learn the latest tidings from Leipsic. There came Clara Schumann (Clara Wieck, the wife of Robert Schumann the composer, and herself the distinguished pianiste) with a letter, weeping. Felix had died yesterday evening." Mendelssohn died November 4th, 1847, at the age of thirty-eight years.

Mr. Haweis has yet another quotation from Devrient, as he describes a scene of those days when he paid the last token of respect and regard to his friend. "Hensel (Mendelssohn's brother-in-law, the widowed husband of his sister Fanny) led me to the corpse, which he had thoughtfully decorated. There lay my beloved friend in a costly coffin, upon cushions of satin, embroidered in tall-growing shrubs, and covered with wreaths of flowers and laurels. He looked much aged, but recalled to me the expression of the boy as I had first seen him. Where my hand had so often stroked the long brown locks and the burning brow of the boy, I now touched the marble forehead of the man. This span of time in my remembrance encloses the whole of happy youth in one perfect indelible thought." At Mendelssohn's funeral, the body was taken into the Pauline (University) Church, Leipsic, preceded by a band of wind instruments playing Beethoven's funeral march. The pall-bearers included Moscheles and David, with two other professors of the Conservatorium. After the pastor's oration, an organ prelude and chorales from *St. Paul*, with

Bach's *Passion*, were played. During the service the coffin remained open, and Bendemann, with two other painters, made drawings of the great man with the wreath of laurel on his brow. At ten at night the coffin was closed and carried by the pupils of the Conservatorium to the station of the Berlin railway—a torchlight procession of more than a thousand persons following the funeral train through the crowded streets of Leipsic. At every railway station which the bier passed, it was greeted by the musical societies of the smaller towns. (Compare this tribute with what Mr. Chorley indicates of the pleasant, thoroughly German popularity of the living man. "It is impossible in description to exaggerate the wholesome inspiriting influence which he exercised wherever he came, at home or abroad; impossible to forget how the hearty people of the old German towns turned out like one man, to follow, and to crown, and to serenade him; impossible not to recall the boyish, candid delight, and yet modesty, with which he enjoyed his popularity.")

At Berlin, which was reached between seven and eight in the morning, the coffin, adorned with ivy leaves and a large wreath of laurel, was carried in a hearse drawn by six horses, draped in black, to the churchyard of the Holy Trinity. "Thousands of persons followed the bier, and Beethoven's funeral march was again played. . . . . After the usual orations, a chorus of six hundred voices sang Grœber's hymn of "Christ and the Resurrection." It is impossible to describe that mournful scene: the men threw earth, and the women and children flowers, on the coffin when it was finally lowered into the grave. Mendelssohn sleeps near that beloved sister whose death so fatally impressed him."

After Mendelssohn's death kings and artists, as far removed in place as in circumstances, wrote letters of condolence to his widow; and in all the principal cities of Germany, England, France, and America musical performances were given in honour of his memory.

Thus passed away in the meridian splendour of his gifts, and amidst the troubled clouds which sometimes gather and form the gloomy sky of a hitherto brilliant noon, Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy. He left five children. His widow, Cécile Mendelssohn, only survived her husband six years.

An engraving, taken from a portrait by Leighton, represents Mendelssohn in a fur-trimmed cloak, tied loosely across his breast. His wavy hair has receded far from his noble temples. He wears neither beard nor moustache, only whiskers far back on the jaw, and not reaching to his chin. His face a long oval, with its fine profile thus fully exposed, is slightly worn, and the mouth and eyes have a somewhat stern and sad expression. Here the face in its likeness is seen in repose; when animated by conversation, and, above all, when he "made music" (as he said himself), we are told that it was "one of the brightest, most expressive countenances ever bestowed on a man of genius."

I have already written of Mendelssohn's character as a man, of its truth, simplicity, and tenderness, of "his fierce scorn of a lie," as well as of his "gentle, unassuming goodness." Mr. Haweis adds some lighter touches to this analysis, supplying traits given by the composer's intimate friends. Mendelssohn had a childlike appetite for sweetmeats, and in his manliness he could be as caressing as a woman, and "would address his friend Edward Devrient,

prolonging the Christian name by a fond lingering cadence into *Edeward*, while gently stroking Devrient's head or leaning confidingly on his arm."

Moscheles speaks of Mendelssohn's custom of walking up and down the room rubbing his hands and muttering "Nice, nice," when he was pleased, and of his once shocking a Leipsic friend by applying the word "hübsch" (pretty) to the grand mountains of Switzerland, "but," adds Moscheles, "with him that word (*hübsch*) meant more than any high-flown epithet; indeed, Mendelssohn, in his distinguishing simplicity and single-heartedness, seemed to be utterly opposed to 'tall' writing and talking."

Mendelssohn's favourite flower was the carnation.*

As a composer, Mendelssohn "had the highest conception of the dignity of art and the moral responsibility of the artist. In this age of mercenary musical manufacture and art-degradation, Mendelssohn towers above his contemporaries like a moral lighthouse in the midst of a dark, troubled sea."—(*Haweis.*)

"I take music in a very serious light," writes Mendelssohn, magnifying his calling; "and I consider it quite inadmissible to compose anything that I do not thoroughly feel. It is just as if I were to utter a falsehood; for notes

* "It was his (Mendelssohn's) correspondence which actually took up most of his time. He must have written an incredible number of letters. . . . . Mendelssohn was very fond of repeating any funny expression or word over and over again till it became a joke. As in former years he had amused himself with calling me 'Old Drama,' so now, during this winter, for a long time he always addressed me with the words, 'Hail, Zedekiah!' out of a chorus from the *Destruction of Jerusalem*, or else it would be a passage out of some pianoforte piece which he liked, and which he would always be bringing up again, and playing to me when it was furthest from my thoughts."—FERDINAND HILLER, *in Macmillan's Magazine.*

have as distinct a meaning as words, perhaps even a more definite sense." On another occasion, after criticizing some themes in an opera, which struck him as not merely sensational but as basely sensational, he stated quietly that he had no music for such things—he considered such ignoble; if the present epoch exacted this style, and considered it indispensable, then he would write oratorios.

To oratorios Mendelssohn restored the deep religious feeling of Handel—such feeling as had been wanting in the noble work of Beethoven and the beautiful work of Haydn. Moscheles wrote of *St. Paul*, "Its chief qualities are, in my judgment, majesty and noble simplicity, deep feeling, and an antique form." Mendelssohn attached great importance to the text of his work, and the libretto into which it was framed. Not only did his refined taste and cultivated intellect require dignity, beauty, and fitness in the words which he was to set to music, but, as a reverent, earnest student of the Bible, he would have no selection or transposition of Scripture which was not in keeping with the divine spirit of all revelation. He did not regard his own work as by any means perfect, but, like the great apostle, left the things which were behind, and pressed on to those which were before. He would put aside some cherished scheme, such as the setting of the *Tempest*, and more of Shakspeare's plays, to music, as "tasks he one day might attempt," when, he would say, he "could write better." It might have been this true modesty underlying his firm confidence, this sense of his own shortcomings and sincere depreciation of his own work, quite as much as his craving for the goodwill of his fellow-creatures, and his impulse to say and write pleasant things, which has brought upon Mendelssohn the charge

that, in spite of his integrity of character, his certificates to, and recommendations of the attainments of contemporary composers and musicians, are to be taken with a reservation, and are of limited value. Certainly, if he proved tolerant to the faults of his fellows, it was not because he was indulgent to his own.

Mendelssohn has left behind him a great mass of published work, which was accomplished before the premature close of his career. The single province of a composer which he hardly entered upon was that of the opera.

Of Mendelssohn's principal works in sacred music there are the two oratorios of *St. Paul* and *Elijah*, the "Lobgesang" (or Hymn of Praise), "Lauda Sion," the Lutheran service music for Berlin, and the cathedral service for England. He wrote three grand symphonies, four grand and two or three less important concert overtures, several pianoforte concert pieces, a violin concerto, and the cantata on the *Erste Walpurgis Nacht*. His theatrical music, for revived Greek dramas, for Racine's *Athalie*, and for the whole of Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, was fine work, standing apart from the rest. Mendelssohn's vocal music was very considerable; in it I cannot help alluding to the exquisite song of "Wert thou in the cauld blast?" the popularity of which in private and homely circles, far beyond the pale of sacred harmonic and philharmonic societies, is at least equal to that of Haydn's "My mother bids me bind my hair." Mendelssohn's chamber music numbered, among various more or less famous quartetts, trios, sonatas, preludes, fugues, rondos, studies, his still better known "Lieder ohne Wörter" (or "Songs without Words"), "the last an original form of composition."—(*Chorley.*) Another creation, as it may be called, of Men-

delssohn's was "the form of developed movement in any variety of measure, which all will recognise in his *Scherzo.*" —(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*) Mendelssohn is known to have left behind him a large amount of unpublished work, at least equal to that which he published in his lifetime. His family appointed executors (among whom was Moscheles) to select and give to the world such portions of this material as they judged fit for the public and worthy of the fame of the composer. The executors are considered to have done their work with great, if still sparing, judiciousness, having had more regard for the opinion of the dead than for the desires of the musical world of the living.

As an executant on the piano and organ Mendelssohn had immense faculty, with a style "unapproachable in its grace," while his fancy and his memory were alike inexhaustible.

The defect alleged against Mendelssohn's work is a want of force and fire (*Pauer*), perhaps attendant on its extreme polish.

Mendelssohn had a specially deep regard for the music of Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven. From Weber's *Oberon* Mendelssohn is believed to have taken the idea of his *Midsummer Night's Dream.*

CHAPTER VII.

Cherubini, 1760—1842. Spontini, 1778. Rossini, 1792—1868.
Bellini, 1801—1835. Donizetti, 1798—1848.

BEFORE entering into the lives and labours of some of the great modern Italian composers, I must briefly state what is regarded by the chief authorities as the radical difference between German and Italian music—a difference in which the superiority, though alas! not the popularity, is accorded by the highest critics to German music.

German music is considered to address itself as much to the intellect as to the feelings, and in doing so, while it can and does express the strongest passion and the softest pathos, it is always passion and pathos under the sober restraints of reason, philosophy, and principle. Thus German music, in its great harmonies, is of all music the manliest, womanliest (in the highest sense), most moral, calculated to brace to virtue, and to elevate to higher regions of thought and action.

Italian music, in addressing itself largely to the senses and the emotions, has a tendency to be lusciously sweet, to enervate instead of to brace, and to lend itself to unbridled license and morbid subtleties of passion and feeling. In the case, however, of the music of Muzio Clementi and Cherubini, the earliest of the modern Italian composers,

there is comparatively little of this distinctive general character to be found.

Maria Luigi Carlo Zenobio Salvator Cherubini was born at Florence in 1760. He was taught music by his father when the child was six years of age, and passed rapidly under the care of more experienced teachers to such purpose that in 1773, when he was thirteen years of age, Cherubini wrote a mass and some theatrical pieces which were brought under the notice of Leopold II. Grand Duke of Tuscany, whose reign was distinguished by its beneficence and enlightened regard for the arts, and who settled on young Cherubini a pension to enable him to study under Sarti, the great master of counterpoint at Milan and Bologna. From Sarti Cherubini learned not only the profound knowledge and perfection of style of the old Roman school, but he was appointed by the maestro to compose the airs for the secondary parts in his operas, thus acquiring betimes practice and acquaintance with theatrical details.

Well furnished with the first materials of an earnest and classical composer, Cherubini composed in 1780, when he was twenty, his first independent opera of *Quinto Fabio*, in which he gave the good sign of writing above the comprehension of his audience. After composing one or two more of the early instalments of his no less than twenty-four operas for the theatres of various Italian towns, Cherubini found an engagement in London as music-director of the King's Theatre when he was twenty-five years of age. In London he wrote *Giulio Sabino*, among other nearly forgotten operas, and two years afterwards repaired to Paris and thence to Turin, where he made his first impression in *Ifigenia in Aulide*. From Turin he returned to Paris, and settled there in 1788, when he was twenty-eight years

of age. From this time Cherubini identified himself with France, and set himself to form a new school of music in that country.* He was successful in the attempt, even though there remains the significant fact that, from the first, Cherubini's music has been much more highly appreciated in Germany than in France; and although in his long life he lived to see not only the rise and maturity of the severe classic school in music—a school so dear to the French heart in other departments of art—but its gradual

* Jean Baptiste de Lulli, or, as he himself spelt his name, Lully, was the founder of the French opera, which began by being simple ballet-music, with many songs introduced into its structure. Lulli, a Florentine, was born in 1633. He was taken to Paris by the Chevalier de Guise, that he might serve as page to Mlle. de Montpensier. After being degraded into a scullion, his musical talents raised him to the position of a court favourite and private secretary to Louis XIV. Having become acquainted with Molière, Lulli wrote the melodious music to many of the great dramatist's comedies. Corneille and Fontaine also supplied Lulli with texts. In addition to his musical talents Lulli united those of an actor and dancer, appearing in both capacities with much success on the stage. He made, "in the form and in the character of his overtures," "great advance upon all previous instrumental music." In his private character Lulli is said to have been at once arrogant and time-serving, as well as avaricious. He amassed a large fortune, and died in 1687.—*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*

Jean Philippe Rameau, another of the early French opera-writers, was born at Dijon in 1683. In his youth he is said to have travelled with the performers of a German opera. When settled in Auvergne as organist of the cathedral church of Clermont, he devoted much time to the study of the theory of music, and became the author of several works on the subject, one of which, "Demonstration of the Principle of Theory," has been so highly valued by his countrymen that they have assigned to Rameau the place of the Newton of music. Eventually Rameau was summoned to Paris, and appointed manager of the Opera, for which he composed many original and tuneful operas and ballets. He had the order of St. Michael bestowed on him, and was raised to the rank of a noblêman. He died in 1764.—*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*

decline, until it has been well nigh entirely superseded by the florid sensational school of modern Franco-Italian and Franco-German composers, and by the passion for the quick rattle, the "brutal" gaiety, and strong effects which mark the reign of the Opera Bouffe.

Cherubini was unfortunate in choosing for his first French opera, performed in the Académie in 1788, the subject of *Démophon*, which had already been used by Vogel, a young artist just dead, and popular with French audiences. Notwithstanding this misadventure, the opera, and the light in which it was held by able judges, caused Cherubini's appointment as director of an Italian Opera in Paris.

In the following year, 1791, in the middle of the gathering thunder of the Revolution,* Cherubini, at thirty-one years of age, brought out his *Lodoiska*, his first opera destined to live and to have a European fame. M. Fétis states that Cherubini had two styles at this time, the one pure and simple, the other in which *Lodoiska* was written, powerful and rich in elaboration, helping to create in France what M. Fétis calls "Music of effect (or design)." The last critic admits that Mozart, by his great "combinations of harmony and fine instrumental dispositions united to happy melodies," had already inaugurated this music; but M. Fétis holds that Mozart was before his time even

* In 1792, Rouget de Lisle, an officer of the revolutionary army, who had been thrown into prison in Marseilles, amused himself by composing the words of what he styled the Marseillaise Hymn, and setting them to the music of a march already popular in the town, and the work of a violinist named Baucher. Words and air singularly well matched caught the heated fancy of the *bonnets rouges*, was sung in every terrible scene of the revolution, and, when that was over, the Marseillaise still remained the great national song of France.

in Germany, and had remained unknown in France. At the same time, the critic is of opinion that Cherubini "followed his own inspiration," and was quite original even while he walked in the footsteps of Mozart.

Lodoiska was succeeded by the operas of *Elisa*, *Medée*, the *Deux Journées*, and *Anacreon*. The most of these operas are said to have been so far marred (like Weber's *Euryanthe*) by being the musical setting of poor or foolish stories. Yet their musical merits forced a way for them, and while *Medée* holds a high place in the German répertoire, the overture to *Anacreon* has found great favour in England.

But it was the *Deux Journées*, first performed when Cherubini was forty years of age, which, having a superior text to the other operas, was better calculated to call out and set forth its composer's powers, that has established Cherubini's high position among musicians. M. Fétis writes that more than two hundred representations have not exhausted the enthusiasm of true connoisseurs for this work. It has been left for an English critic* to record that the opera is in a popular sense forgotten in France, while, under its German name of *Der Wasserträger* ("The Water-Carrier"), it is a standard piece frequently given and heartily welcomed in the best German theatres.

In the meantime the Conservatoire had been established in Paris in 1795, and Cherubini was appointed its inspector and professor of composition. From these offices he had his only regular income, which was barely sufficient to enable him to bring up a large family. Revolutionary France was not favourable to a successful career in art. Buonaparte, whether as first consul or emperor,

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

did not extend his patronage to Cherubini, but appeared rather systematically to ignore the Italian composer, one of whose first patrons in Paris had been the coiffeur of the queen, Marie Antoinette, and who had doubtless looked then for support to the members of the ancient *régime*. Neither was Cherubini gifted as a man with qualities which could easily adapt themselves to new circumstances and recommend him to fresh friends. He is described as "harsh and repulsive" to strangers, though he possessed true worth, which made those who had passed the barriers of first acquaintance his firm and fast friends.*

The popularity of Cherubini's works in Germany led to the offer of an engagement for him to write for the Opera in Vienna, which his poverty disposed him willingly to accept. He repaired to Vienna with his family in 1805, and shortly afterwards wrote his beautiful opera of *Faniska*, on account of which Haydn and Beethoven proclaimed Cherubini "the first dramatic composer of his age;" † but the ill-luck of the composer and the times were against his worldly success. War broke out between France and Austria; Francis II. and his court had to quit Vienna; and Cherubini, if he would not forfeit his French citizenship and his office in the Conservatoire, saw himself forced to return to France. Some influential friends sought to overcome the mutual repugnance and prejudice, and to procure for Cherubini an engagement to write for the new court of the Tuileries, and he did write the opera of

* "You would fancy," said Mendelssohn, "that a man could not be a great composer without sentiment, heart, feeling, or whatever else you like to call it; but I declare I believe Cherubini makes everything out of his head."—FERDINAND HILLER, *Macmillan's Magazine*.

† "Biographie Universelle des Musiciens."

Pineviaglione with this design; but it was powerless to subdue Napoleon's rooted distaste to the composer, and to the graver Italian music of which he was the exponent.*

Disappointed and disheartened, Cherubini withdrew from Paris to the retirement of the house of his friend, the Prince de Chimay, where he even threatened in his disgust to renounce his calling of music, and give himself up to the study of botany. He was won from the rash resolution by the necessity of producing a mass for the chapel of Chimay. The Prince had set his heart on having mass music performed there, and who could provide an original mass save Cherubini, and how could Cherubini refuse to lend his genius to promote the cherished wish of his kind host? With reluctance Cherubini set himself to the task, the gratifying result of which was his sense of having, in this year 1808, accomplished an important achievement in a new branch of his art. It had been left for him to unite in the solemn strains of a

* André Ernest Modiste Grétry was of Belgian extraction, having been born at Liége in 1741. After studying in Rome, he was induced to repair to Paris, where his career was one of singular good fortune. In return for the composition of fifty operas (twenty of which, however, are said to have been the work of a friend), he was elected member of the Institute, overwhelmed with artistic honours, to the extent of having a street in his adopted city named for him, and a lawsuit entered upon after his death between representatives in Paris and his birthplace, Liége, for the possession of his heart. He was endowed with pensions both by the later Bourbons and Napoleon. He was a man of limited knowledge in his art, but he wrote at least one opera destined to live. His *Richard Cœur de Lion*, which appeared in Paris in 1785 and in London in 1784, has remained a deserved favourite. Blondel's air, "O Richard, O mon Roi," is well known. Grétry died in 1813. He had a daughter Lucille, who died in her twenty-third year, after having written two operas—a rare achievement for a woman—which were in their time successful.

mass "the severe beauties of fugue and counterpoint with the dramatic expression and the richness of the effects of instrumental music." Even Mozart's *Requiem* had not attained this particular eminence, since (in M. Fétis's opinion) it had not the severe perfection of the old Italian music. The acknowledged success, which extended far and wide, of Cherubini's "Mass in F, for three voices," written when he was in his forty-ninth year, led to his composition of the many grand masses that nobly signalised the latter half of his life. He had not, however, abandoned operatic music, and in 1813 he brought out his opera of the *Abencérages*. It was one of his best works, but had its first triumph shorn by the public calamity of the great French loss at Moscow.

In 1815, Cherubini was in London, having been invited by the Philharmonic Society to write for their concerts. But his style of composition was unsuited for concerts or chamber music, and his overture and symphony, written for the Philharmonic Society, and of which the performance was conducted by the composer, proved a failure.

However, Cherubini's days of adversity were drawing to a close. The restoration of the monarchy, with the establishment of Louis XVIII. on the throne of France, made every outward difference to Cherubini. He was appointed Surintendant de la Musique du Roi and Master of the Royal Chapel, besides being created Chevalier of the Legion of Honour, and invested with the Order of St. Michael; nay, a month before his death, Louis Philippe conferred on the composer the Cross of the Legion of Honour, the first occasion when such a distinction was bestowed on a musician. He was made a member of the Institut, and re-elected Professor of Composition to the Conserva-

toire. It was in his character of Master of the Royal Chapel that Cherubini wrote (with the exception of his first mass) all his ecclesiastical music, notable among which are his "Requiem in C Minor," his "Mass in A" for the coronation of Louis XVIII., and his "Mass in G" for the coronation of Charles X.*

Having attempted violin quartetts without any more success than he had met with in the other departments of chamber music, Cherubini in his age went back to operatic music, and wrote at the age of seventy-three years, in 1833, his fine opera of *Ali Baba*, which, undervalued like the rest of his operas in Paris, was hailed with delight in Germany as well worthy of its gifted and venerable composer.

Cherubini's last work of any importance was, like Mozart's, a requiem. Cherubini's work was a "Requiem for Male Voices," having been written to meet an ecclesiastical regulation which forbade female voices in church choirs. As it happened, it was first performed at Cherubini's own funeral. He died in Paris in 1842, in his eighty-third year.

Cherubini's excellence as a composer, apart from his high and thorough cultivation, lies in his dramatic vigour, earnestness, brilliance, and individuality. His faults are thought to consist of a deficiency in constructive power, which caused him to fail in purely instrumental and chamber music—a disposition in the pursuit of technical perfection to lose the dramatic sentiment of his scenes, and (although this objection is strongly combated by M. Fétis) an absence of simple melody in his grand harmonies. In addition to Cherubini's twenty-four operas

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

and many masses, he wrote a large number of minor pieces for church music, much chamber music, odes and cantatas for public occasions, and "countless solfeggios and exercises" (to be used in the Conservatoire), which are still of great reputation.

Gaspard Spontini, born in 1778, at Miolatti, a village near the town of Jesi, in the Roman State, is better known in France and Prussia, where he spent the greater part of his life, than in England. Educated in the Royal College at Naples, his early operas, whether in Italy or France, made little impression, until his thirtieth year, when, after he had been appointed director of music to the Empress Josephine, he brought out with great success, at Paris, his fine opera of *La Vestale;* another opera, *Fernand Cortez*, which Spontini produced two years later, was held in nearly equal esteem. Although Spontini continued to compose for many years, during which he married the niece of Erard, the pianoforte maker, and received many honours, including the Orders of the Legion of Honour and the Prussian Red Eagle, and the membership of the Institut and of other learned and musical societies, he hardly wrote anything afterwards at all approaching to these operas. Indeed, while Court Kapell-Meister and director of the Opera at Berlin, not only was Spontini's management severely censured, and every new piece which he produced more or less condemned, but the critics pretended to question whether it were possible that he could have written *La Vestale.*

Gioacchimo Rossini, the most popular of the dramatic composers of the nineteenth century, was born at Pesaro, in the States of the Church, in 1792. His father was a player on the French horn, who, during the summer, made

one of the strolling troop of players and musicians accustomed to visit in succession the fairs of the small Italian towns. His mother, Anne Guidarini, said to have been one of the prettiest women in the Romagna, sang as a seconda donna in the troop. In winter the family returned to the little town of Pesaro, and lived on their slender earnings till summer and the fairs came again. It is said that young Rossini's fine voice attracted his father's attention to the musical genius of his son, and it is believed that the lad was "second horn" in the fair operettas so early as his tenth year, and before he began to study pianoforte playing and singing at Bologna in his twelfth year. The wandering, lawless, light-hearted, and light-headed life of the strolling troop left an abiding impression on Rossini's character. When he left the troop to study in Bologna, he diversified what was to him the dull life of the schools by earning *paoli* from singing in the churches. In 1806, when Rossini was fourteen, he could sing at first sight any piece of music put before him; and his parents, desiring to profit by their son's abilities, took him on a musical tour through the small towns of the Romagna, when Gioacchimo acted as maestro of the band. In 1807, the little company had returned to Bologna, and young Rossini entered as a student the Lyceum, to receive lessons in counterpoint from Padre S. Mattei. "Few musical organizations," writes M. Fétis, "have been less disposed than was Rossini's to submit passively to the precepts of the schools." He was inclined to be guided by his keen Italian instincts alone, and he could not comprehend the necessity for preparatory exercises and a gradual though sure advance to a desired end. The Padre Mattei did contrive to bring his pupil,

with whatever negligence and disgust, and pains and groans, on the two sides, to the extreme limit of simple counterpoint; but when the teacher proposed to go on to "canons, double counterpoint, and fugues," and prefaced further progress by the innocent but injudicious remark that simple counterpoint might be enough for writing secular music, but that for the ecclesiastical style a more extensive knowledge was necessary, Rossini, who at that time detested church music as he detested schools, seized the opportunity to make a stand and strike work. "Master, what do you say—that with what I have learnt until to-day one can write operas?" "Doubtless," replied the baited master." "That is enough. I do not want to know more," said Rossini defiantly; "for it is operas I wish to write."

Rossini's critics agree in acknowledging that in many respects he was independent of the schools; but the ablest of his judges record also that by his decision he narrowed his sphere, and encumbered it with difficulties. According to himself, if the statements of so vain and unconscientious a man deserve much trust, he was largely self-educated in music, and his education was carried on by his study of the works of Haydn, and especially of Mozart.

Already some works of Rossini's had with mistaken zeal been published by his friends in 1808, when he was sixteen years of age. In his eighteenth year he wrote but did not produce an opera. Through the influence of a noble family called Perticari, belonging to the little town of Pesaro, their young townsman Rossini was enabled to have his next opera, in one act, played at Venice in 1810, when he was eighteen years of age, and where he and his piece were received with little more than the

indulgence due to a first and juvenile performance. His next opera, produced at Bologna, was less successful; but he was able immediately afterwards to put in representation his first opera (*Demetrio e Polibio* by name) at Rome, and it is said to have afforded certain indications of his future splendid career.

In 1812, when Rossini was twenty years of age, the fertility of power which attended his early manhood showed itself. Within the space of twelve months he wrote five operas; of some of these hardly the titles survive. Rossini's first great success was in *Tancredi*, brought out for the carnival in Venice in 1813, when the composer was twenty-one years of age. "The chivalrous tone of the first of these works," writes M. Fétis, referring to *Tancredi*, "the noble melancholy of the part of Tancredi (the crusader), the interest sustained for the first time from one end to the other of a serious Italian opera by the continuous spring of inspiration, a harmony of which the piquant sequels were until then unknown to Rossini's fellow-countrymen, and, finally, an instrumental accompaniment, of which the forms were not less new to them—all procured for the creation of the artist one of those emotional successes which are the certain signs of an epoch of real transformation in art." M. Fétis adds that there were not wanting in *Tancredi* abuses and negligences which provoked severe censure; but already the author of *Tancredi* had comprehended that defects of the nature alluded to, have for their censors only the able and learned (always the few in number), and that the public does not analyze what touches it. Rossini wrote emphatically for the people, and won entirely his great audience. Such a triumph of the naturalistic over the classic is generally

accompanied by violence and excess; thus the partisans of Rossini were fanatical enough to assert that if so fine a musician broke the great fixed authenticated laws which govern the science of music, why then the worse for these laws; and Rossini was exactly the man to echo the outrageous saying. Rossini would say of great soldiers and statesmen, "They have gained prizes in the lottery of ambition; but I have drawn a prize in the lottery of nature."

One of Rossini's great admirers gives a lively description of the first reception of *Tancredi*. "No adequate idea can be formed of the success which this delightful opera obtained at Venice. Suffice it to say that the presence of Napoleon himself, who honoured the Venetians with a visit, was unable to call off their attention from Rossini. All was enthusiasm—*tutto furore!* to use the terms of that expressive language which seems to be created for the use of the arts. From the gondolier to the patrician, everybody was repeating 'Mi revedrai ti revedro.' In the very courts of law the judges were obliged to impose silence on the auditory, who were ceaselessly humming 'Ti revedro.'"* The same author lends us his graphic experience of one of the little Italian opera-houses of Rossini's earlier days on the first evening of a new piece. "The maestro takes his place at the piano; the theatre overflows; people have flocked from ten leagues distances. The curious form an encampment round the theatre in their calashes; all the inns are filled to excess, where insolence reigns at its height. All occupations have ceased; at the moment of the performance the town has the aspect of a desert. All the passions, all the solicitudes, all

* "Biographical Dictionary of Musicians."

the life of a whole population, is concentrated in the theatre. The overture commences; so intense is the attention that the buzzing of a fly could be heard. On its conclusion the most tremendous uproar ensues. It is either applauded to the clouds, or hissed, or rather howled at, without mercy. . . . In an Italian theatre they shout, they scream, they stamp, they belabour the backs of the seats with their canes, with all the violence of persons possessed. . . . At the close of each air the same terrific uproar ensues; the bellowing of an angry sea could give but a faint idea of its fury. Such at the same time is the taste of an Italian audience, that they at once distinguish whether the merit of an air belongs to the singer or the composer. The cry is 'Bravo ——' (a favourite singer), or the whole theatre resounds with 'Bravo maestro!' Rossini then rises from his place at the piano, his countenance wearing an air of gravity—a thing very unusual with him; he makes three obeisances, which are followed by salvos of applause, mingled with a variety of short and panegyrical phrases. This done they proceed to the next piece."

We happen to have M. Fétis's comment on the evil of the Italian practice of making the composer sit in the orchestra during the three first representations of his new opera; success is thus rendered more intoxicating, while failure becomes as it were a personal disgrace. No doubt a constant exposure to passionate, fickle Italian audiences was among the effects which helped to demoralise Rossini both as an artist and as a man.

Rossini's reckless mode of composition, which his followers seemed to regard as a merit, and to view as a special form of inspiration, is thus indicated in those early years

of success. He was offered engagements from the impressarios of every theatre in Italy, and having accepted a commission he would arrive to stay in that town for three or four months, falling at once on his arrival into the gayest and most dissipated society of the place which agreed to fête him. He would waste some weeks in this manner, and in ridiculing the libretto which he was to set to music; then, as a preparatory step, he would put himself to some trouble to study the voices and capabilities of the operatic troop for which he was to write; withal the time would pass till there was little more than three weeks to the date fixed for the coming out of the opera before Rossini wrote a single note of his score, and even after he began to write, he would still break off his task to pass the half of the day and the night in the idle, pleasure-loving, vicious society which surrounded him. It need hardly be said that Rossini's music, however sweet and sonorous, animated and pathetic, with unrestrained Italian sweetness and sonorousness, animation and pathos, was as deficient in the higher expressions of truth, nobleness, and reverence which characterized the music of Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven, as Rossini himself was incapable of comprehending the fervour of Handel, the single-hearted earnestness of Mozart, and the rugged truth of Beethoven.

In the beginning of his triumph Rossini's pleasures were the cheap pleasures of even riotous young Italy; he was not tried with any great money acquisitions; and with regard to the sums—no doubt regarded in his country and time as very fair sums—which he did earn, he did not show the coveteousness that he betrayed in later years, when he passed through the not uncommon transformation which

substitutes for the prodigality of unprincipled youth the miserliness of equally unprincipled age.

Rossini was paid for his operas, and that after they were becoming so popular that the *Tancredi* within four years had been sung in every theatre of note in Europe, not more than forty pounds apiece; so that even when he wrote five operas in the year, his income from that source did not exceed two hundred pounds a year. Of the several portions of this pay he would often not have more than a few sequins to carry away with him after defraying his expenses and sending a considerable share of his profits to his mother, "the only person with whom he was known to correspond," we are told, and in this correspondence he chose to address the recipients of his letters as "all' orvertissima Signora Rossini, madre del celebre maestro in Bologna." Indeed, Rossini's self-satisfaction was so complete, sincere, and open, that it would have been almost touching, like the self-satisfaction of a child, had it not been for the arrogance and unfaithfulness of the man in whose character it formed a prominent feature.

After *Tancredi*, which left Rossini without a rival in Italy, he poured forth a succession of operas, of which the most esteemed were the comic opera of *Italiana in Algeri*, and *Il Turco in Italia*, and the serious opera of *Elisabetta Regina d' Inghilterra*.

In the meantime Rossini had entered into an engagement with a manager, who was at the head of the three great Theatres of S. Carlo, Naples, La Scala, Milan, and the Imperial Theatre, Vienna, to write two operas a year for him, and to act as musical director, with a promise of a sure and increasing income of four hundred and eighty

pounds a year, and at the same time with some liberty of continuing to write for other theatres.

The years 1816 and 1817, Rossini being in his twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth years, proved among the most fruitful of the wonderfully fruitful years of his spendthrift youth; for that he was a spendthrift in the gravest sense of all, that of the lavish, regardless exercise of his genius, there can be no question. In the course of those two years he wrote four operas, "each enough to have made a man's reputation,"—*Il Barbiere di Seviglia*, the first of his operas acted in London; *Otello*, a version of Shakspeare's tragedy; *Cenerentola;* and *La Gazza Ladra.* Strangely enough, even with his capricious public, *Il Barbiere di Seviglia*, written for Rome, met with a very unfavourable reception there. An older Italian composer, with whom the Romans held it presumption in young Rossini to attempt to compete, had written on the same theme. Rossini, with all his confidence, had scrupled to adapt the libretto of the other master, who had become a favourite with the Roman public, and had so added to his usual delays on this occasion that he was placed under arrest by the manager, and, under the pressure of this condition, wrote, within ten days or a fortnight, this most popular of all his operas. A packed crowd in the Roman theatre, on the night of the first representation of Rossini's masterpiece, refused it so much as a hearing, and caused it to be brought to a close amidst a hideous uproar of reprobation. Rossini did not venture to encounter a similar cruel ordeal on the second night's representation, but on the plea of illness, real or feigned, took refuge in bed in his lodgings, where he lay in the utmost anxiety awaiting the result. Suddenly a great noise was heard under his windows, and

several persons rushed tumultuously up the staircase leading to his room. Seized with terror, Rossini imagined that it was the friends of his rival pursuing him to his retreat and coming to take personal vengeance on him for his musical sins, when he recognised the voices of some of the operatic troop (including Garcia, the great singer), tumbling over each other in their haste to announce to him his and their redemption from disgrace; for the opera had been applauded to the skies, and the street was already filling with the audience from the theatre, coming in an improvised torchlight procession to give proof to the composer of their homage. This sudden rescinding of a judgment, and complete reversal of its sentence, is said to have established Rossini's supreme popularity in Italy.

In the opera of *Otello*, Rossini proved the extent of his conquest of public favour, by entirely and triumphantly discarding the old Italian dogma that instrumental music should in operas be entirely subservient to the singing and recitative. In *Otello* every bit of recitative was accompanied by striking instrumental music. Between 1817 and 1822, while still under thirty years of age, Rossini produced, among his greater works, the operas of *Armida*, *Mosè in Egitto* (written for Lent), *Ermione*, *La Donna del Lago*,* *Maometto Secondo*. Of the *Mosè*, which is

* Sontag met Sir Walter Scott at the Moscheles' house on the eve of her singing in Rossini's *Donna del Lago*, founded on his "Lady of the Lake." It has been said elsewhere that Sir Walter felt mortified by finding himself beset in London, and even followed to Abbotsford, by hosts of admirers, whose sole acquaintance with his works was derived from "a single attendance at the *Donna del Lago* at the Italian Opera." But he was very gracious to Sontag. "When she questioned him about her costume as the 'Lady of the Lake,' he described to her with the utmost minuteness every fold of the plaid, and was greatly pleased when I (Mrs. Moscheles) produced a genuine

one of Rossini's finest works, the anecdote is told that, while he was writing it, some foolish person made the protest to the composer, "What! you are going to make the Hebrew sing! Do you mean to make them twang it as they do in the synagogue?" When the objection awoke a new idea, for Rossini "sketched out on the spot a rough draught of the magnificent chorus so much admired in the opera, and which is observed to begin with a kind of nasal twang peculiar to the synagogue. *Mosè in Egitto* has never been successfully performed in England, although it has been tried here under the different names of "Peter the Hermit" and "Zara."

In 1822, Rossini, at thirty years of age, after writing *Zelmira*, visited Bologna on his way to direct the opera at Vienna, and during his visit married Mdlle. Colbran, the possessor of a large property near Bologna, and the prima donna of St. Carlo, Naples, carrying her with him to sing in *Zelmira* at Vienna, where they had a princely reception. I have already chronicled the fact that Beethoven's popularity waned before Rossini's, and that the triumphant maestro called four times in a vain effort to meet and propitiate the surly, justly indignant meister. Beethoven said of Rossini, "He is a good scene-painter."

Rossini's engagement with the Neapolitan manager having terminated, a dispute arose with regard to the composer's right to dispose of *Zelmira*, which ended in one of the two lawsuits that Rossini had to institute in the course of his life. Rossini not only lost the lawsuit, but

satin clan plaid, the present of Lady Sinclair whilst in Edinburgh, the loan of which I was delighted to promise to Sontag. He showed her the particular way the brooch should be fastened at the shoulder, and would not allow any alteration."

began to incur personal unpopularity. In fact, while he had been the idol of the musical world of Italy, he had tried his worshippers sorely. His indolence * was at least as great as his vanity; and without doubt there was a great strain imposed on his resources. According to M. Fétis, Rossini's music (with its incessant appeals to the senses and the feelings and with its deficient knowledge) tended sorely to repetition, which he was forced to guard against by such determined efforts as those that changed the chivalrous tone of *Armida* into religious sentiment in *Mosè*, simplicity of lyric declamation in *Ermione*, the romantic traits of mountain life in *La Donna del Lago*, and savage vigour and patriotic devotion in *Maometto*.

But all effort was hateful to Rossini: even the personal reputation which he cherished proudly, while he affected to despise it, could not spur him on to the necessary struggle. He had no higher motive than glory and gain by his art; for it is distinctly admitted that his great and radical defect as an artist was that he had no faith in art, no faith in the future (*M. Fétis*), and, it might have been added, no faith in the great Giver who requires of men the generous, trustful exercise of his gifts. In order to lighten the burden which he himself had done much to lay on his lazy shoulders, Rossini, who was in the habit of evading engagements and mocking at obligations, made use of every possible stratagem with less cunning

* Of this indolence many absurd stories are told, such as that Rossini, when writing a duet for one of his operas in bed, having dropped the roll of paper, rather than have to rise to pick it up, preferred to re-write the whole duet. A more credible story is that of the composer's having tried hard to persuade the managers of various theatres, that there was no occasion for overtures to operas, in order that he might be saved the additional trouble of writing them.

than effrontery. He returned perpetually to his early and inferior operas, not as Mendelssohn returned to his early dreams, to work them out more thoroughly, and render them nearer perfection by the maturity of his powers and the treasures of his experience; but with the sole purpose of vamping up and patching together fragments which, under a fresh name, might pass muster as one of the new operas which he had bound himself to supply. His impulsive, plain-spoken countrymen, naturally regarded such treatment as an insult to their musical intelligence, and they turned upon their spoilt favourite. One strange story of these make-shifts is confirmed by Fétis. An impressario had offended Rossini, who revenged the offence by bringing together in a new opera commissioned by the impressario, and which was made up of the rags and tags of old operas, every exasperating piece of carelessness and extravagance which could come into the composer's indolent yet inventive head. A few days before the representation, the director apologized to the composer for having given him a bad text to set to music, and was startled by the cool reply, "Be comforted; I have perceived it, and I have made my music worse still." However, the listener thought this was only a bad joke on the part of the maestro. On the eve of the representation, when it was far too late to undo his mischief, terror for his own reputation seized on the composer, who had behaved like a spiteful school-boy. He could see only one way out of the dilemma, and that was to cause such a climax in the impertinent negligence and absurdity of his work, that the whole theatre should rise in revolt and prevent the further progress of the opera. This feat, on a par in honour with what went before it, he accomplished by directing that in

the allegro of the overture the violins should break off at the end of every bar, in order that the violinists might give simultaneously raps with their bows on the tin shades of the candlesticks. The audience, met for artistic pleasure, were incensed at the tomfoolery, and they showed their rage without any bounds. They hissed till Rossini, who had purposely raised the storm, fled from the orchestra; they tore up the benches and broke the chandeliers, and the house closed in confusion and darkness; so the opera was stopped, as Rossini had planned.

It was after such an unpleasant encounter in Venice that Rossini strove to discharge his debts, and recover lost ground, by writing his opera of *Semiramide*. Here there was little fault to be found with the composer, who had done himself justice in an original and higher vindication than he had ever yet given of his splendid talents. But lost favour is not easily regained, and, in addition, *Semiramide* is said to have been really bountiful in merit to a degree, beyond the comprehension of Rossini's Venetian audience, who received it with comparative coolness. As enraged and indignant as if he had never sinned against the loyalty of his hearers, or never failed to train the ears listening to him, Rossini vowed that he would write no more for Italy, and abandoned the native country which had so exalted her son.

Rossini went, in 1823 (his thirty-second year), by Paris to London, being received in both France and England with the utmost enthusiasm. He had been offered a lucrative engagement to direct the opera, and produce a new work at the King's Theatre, where Madame Rossini was to sing; but her appearance proved a failure, and the promised new opera faded away into the representation of *Zelmira*,

which was not a success. In this manner Rossini's work in England, where he stayed only five months, soon merged into conducting and singing at numerous concerts and into giving lessons. Notwithstanding this limitation, so great was his fame and his shrewdness in availing himself of that fame, that Rossini contrived in less than half a year to amass from the unrivalled golden tax paid by a country which has been lavish in its patronage of Italian musicians, two hundred and fifty thousand francs. A select company of members of parliament alone made an offering to Rossini of two thousand pounds. In the autumn Rossini returned to Paris, where he was immediately appointed director of the Italian Opera, with the condition that he should compose for that theatre and write operas in the French language for the Académie Royale. At Paris, Rossini had been long ere this hailed as the great composer of the nineteenth century; and not only in the Opera House, but through the innumerable arrangements and adaptations of portions of his popular music for all instruments, and its incessant performance by military bands and in private houses, the composer's name had become a household word in the country. Nothing could exceed the eagerness of the welcome accorded to him, or the *prestige* with which he saw himself surrounded, while he found in the minister Rochefoucault a patron so blindly indulgent and accommodating, as to be willing to pass over almost any offence on the part of the new director of the Opera.

Such men as Rossini learn few lessons in a career of worldly success. His constitutional indolence had become chronic, his arrogance insolence, and his conceit had taken the form of an attempt to mystify the French world of art by a pretence of contempt for all that it valued and

venerated. For five years Rossini gave nothing to the world, waiting anxiously for a great opera, from the composer of *Otello*, worthy of his abilities and in fulfilment of his engagement, except little operas made up of fragments of old works, a re-arrangement of his *Maometto* as the *Siège de Corinthe*, and a re-arrangement better deserving the name of his *Mosè in Egitto*.

At last, in 1829, when Rossini was thirty-seven years of age, he brought out another great opera, *Guillaume Tell*. Honourable in every respect to its composer as this opera was, the defects of its libretto—a bad version of Schiller's play—grievously offended sensitive French ears, and caused the greatest success which the fine music met with, to be found for a long time, only in concert performances and pianoforte playing, for which many portions of the opera were immediately adapted. So partial a success was a severe wound to Rossini's pride—a wound which proved incurable. The day after the first representation of *Guillaume Tell*, the composer, while still in the early prime of life, "threw down his pen to resume it no more." "One success more would add nothing to my renown," he said haughtily to his remonstrating friends; "one fall might impair it. I have no need of the one, and I will not expose myself to the other." The man was absolutely incapable of measuring the mean egotism of such a speech.

In the mean time Rossini, by his utter neglect, had reduced the Italian opera in Paris from a state of prosperity to the brink of ruin. Even M. de Larochefoucault was compelled to take some step to remedy the injury inflicted by Rossini's maladministration. He was led to withdraw from the directorship of the Italian Opera in order to occupy a new post made for him by the minister. This office

of Intendant Général de la Musique du Roi, et Inspecteur du Chant en France, M. Fétis stigmatizes as "grotesque sinecures," which imposed on Rossini "no other obligation than that of receiving an annual income of twenty thousand francs, and of being pensioned in case, through unforeseen circumstances, his *functions* ceased." The supposed end was to induce Rossini, with literally no restriction of proprietorship in his works, to write for the French opera. But the revolution of 1830 followed speedily, and Rossini's appointment was annulled, like that of other appointments. It seemed that his pension would lapse also; and he could well afford to lose it, since he was a very rich man through his gains, his wife's fortune, and the share which his friends MM. Rothschild and Aguado had given him in the profits of the patent of the Italian Opera. But Rossini held stoutly by his retiring pension of six thousand francs, and in order to secure it entered on a lawsuit which lasted six years. During this lawsuit he sought to promote his cause by such an affectation of poverty as seems to have deceived nobody. He withdrew to a miserable lodging at the top of the Italian Theatre. In this garret he received the first personages of the country (whom he often made wait long in a species of antechamber), and distinguished foreigners, including the ex-Emperor of Brazil, who was forced to mount a kind of ladder to reach the artist in his assumption of obscurity and wretchedness. To these visitors Rossini apologized for his situation by the losses which he had sustained and the economy he was under the necessity of practising. While he was keeping up this despicable masquerade in Paris, he had at Bologna a palace in which were collected together the works of art, the beautiful porcelains, and the magnificent silver plate of the old

ambassador Mareschalchi (*Fétis*). In the end Rossini won his lawsuit and kept his pension. He had taken the crafty precaution of getting the king, as an act of honour, to sign his engagement, so that the obligation was rendered one of the personal debts of Charles X., which the new administration felt bound to discharge.

In 1836 Rossini, at forty-four years of age, proposed to pay a visit to his native Italy. The burning of the Italian Theatre, Paris, in which one of his friends perished, during the first months of his absence, induced him to give up the idea of returning, and to settle at Bologna; and there, or at Milan, he lived for upwards of thirty years, only leaving Italy to make occasional short sojourns in Paris. During this latter half of his long life Rossini wrote almost nothing, his work being summed up for the most part in a cantata on "Joan of Arc," three choruses on Faith, Hope, and Charity, for female voices, and several pianoforte pieces. He had announced, previous to his quitting France, that he was thenceforth to direct his attention to the church music which he had begun by detesting; but the sole result of this decision, if it were not mere idle boast, was the setting, in the days of his lawsuit, of the great mournful Catholic hymn of the *Stabat Mater*, written in the thirteenth century by the old devout Franciscan monk, whose name in the world was Jacopo Beneditti, and his nickname, from his austerities in the cloister, Jacopone, and which had already been set to music by Palestrina.

Rossini gained his end of personal renown and riches, which he was spared to enjoy to old age. But his biographers tell us that he presented at last "the melancholy spectacle of a man endowed with all the gifts of nature

and fortune devoured by *ennui*, and discontented with himself and others"—a peevish cynic. Rossini died in Paris, in 1868, at seventy-six years of age.

Gustave Doré has an engraving of Rossini dead. The face, with its delicate aquiline nose, fine mouth which might have looked sardonic enough in life, and pointed chin, lies in perfect rest, and there is a crucifix resting on the pulseless heart. Moscheles speaks of seeing Rossini's portrait framed in porcelain, with the names of his works on the frame, hanging up in Rossini's reception-room.

Rossini not only revolutionised the music of Italy, he revolutionised the music of the civilised world, and very few composers since his day have been able to resist his influence. He is the great master of magnificent and strikingly sensuous and emotional music; his followers rarely attaining to his great merits, while they propagate his faults. Less than fifteen years sufficed for Rossini "to bring his countrymen to love a harmony bristling with dissonances and undergoing ceaseless modulations; to divide their attention between singing and complicated instrumental music; and to conceive such a passion for noise as could no longer content itself with the largest orchestra, but must have on the stage the military band, tambourines, and the big drum" (*Fétis*), until the consequences went far beyond what Rossini contemplated, and the innovator found himself in his age in the position of the masters of his youth—at whose condemnation he had laughed, not anticipating that he himself would become in time the left-behind critic and judge. It took far less than fifteen years for Rossini's sweet, gay, melting, and enthralling music to sweep aside the thoughtful, lofty, sublime, and pitiful, infinitely truer and therefore of

necessity infinitely more tender music of his great German predecessors and contemporaries.

Moscheles's opinion of Rossini's *Stabat Mater* was, that it was a model of "singableness," but not sufficiently church music to his taste, and that the solitary fugue was clumsy. The majority delighted in the captivating Italian phrases, which Moscheles admired too, but which he could not think were in their right place.*

Vincenzo Bellini was born at Catania, Sicily, in 1801. His musical talents, early shown, were first trained by his grandfather—an accomplished musician.

When Bellini was eighteen years of age, he was admitted as a free student of the Musical College of Naples. There he studied composition, and wrote a mass, choruses, solfeggios, and a cantata. His first opera was written while he was still at college, in his twenty-fifth year, in 1825, and was privately represented in the theatre of the college.

Bellini soon won a good patron in the Duke de Noja, by whose influence the young composer was enabled to produce his next opera at the Theatre S. Carlo, Naples, but it neither won nor merited great success. Its unsuccessful representation was followed by a disappointment which drove Bellini from Naples, and coloured all his short life. He loved the daughter of a Neapolitan judge, who, objecting to Bellini's social position, declined his suit, and separated the lover from his mistress. Bellini was just the soft, sensitive, one-ideaed, somewhat weak, as well as obstinate man, who was likely to be not only deeply hurt, but embittered by such treatment.

* Rossini's song, "Di tante palpiti," once rivalled in fame Mozart's "La ci darem."

Bellini left Naples for Milan, where, with good fortune which might have comforted him in bracing him to win his fair lady, he was enabled to write for the theatre of the Scala in 1827, while still only twenty-six years of age, and his opera, *Il Pirata*, which was carelessly listened to as the work of a young unknown man on its first representation, created so great a sensation on its second representation as at once to give Bellini a good rank among composers. The fame and the representations of *Il Pirata* spread, and it was produced in London in the course of two years.

Bellini's next two operas—those of *Zaira* and *I Montecchi ed i Capuletti*, on the old tragic Italian story of Romeo and Juliet, played and sung, the one at Parma, the other at Venice—were neither of them so good or so fortunate as *Il Pirata;* but the composer renewed and confirmed his first success in his succeeding operas of *La Sonnambula* and *Norma*, both first given, though at different theatres and in different years, at Milan. Oddly enough, in *Norma* Bellini's experience in *Il Pirata* was repeated, its first representation being a comparative failure, while its second representation was an unmistakable triumph. Yet while it probably required time for an Italian audience, which had been taught to dote on the rich effectiveness of Rossini, to appreciate the simpler melodiousness of his successor, it is said that the heroic cast of *Norma* was hardly the style of work to display its composer's merits to the greatest advantage,* so that the first coldness of the audiences is less to be wondered at than its later enthusiasm and the universal regard in which the opera has since then been held.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

The song of "Ah! non giunge," the duet of "Deh conte," and the air of "Casta Diva," no doubt contributed much to the change of public opinion, which was not influenced, as in the case of Rossini's *Barber of Seville*, by any party war with its blind animosity. Bellini himself regarded *Norma* as his greatest effort till that time, and repaired to Naples with the kindly project of presenting the opera to his old master in the College of Music to whom he had dedicated the opera. If any other wish or hope lurked in Bellini's mind in revisiting the scene of his old heart-wound, as well as of his youthful studies, it was not so much the modest, manly wish to prove his worth and establish his claim to the woman he had loved, as the vain, rankling desire to vindicate the position to which he had been born by natural gifts, and to punish the lady and her father for the severity with which he had been treated. It is said that the judge, seeing Bellini return as the first living composer of Italy, wished to make amends, but that the sore pride of Bellini would not permit a reconciliation and reparation till it was too late; for the poor victim of father and lover died shortly afterwards, and it is added that Bellini never recovered from the effects of the news of her death. If the sad little story be true, it carries with it its own moral.

Bellini was in London in 1834, as director of such of his works as were played there that season. Already he had written another opera since *Norma*, that of *Beatrice di Tenda*, of less repute, and he was still to write what many critics consider the best of his works. While residing in Paris he composed for the Théâtre Italien there his opera of *I Puritani*. Its success was marked and complete, and won for the composer the order of the Legion of Honour.

Very soon afterwards, *I Puritani* was produced in London, and was received with equal favour.

Bellini was at the height of outward prosperity, his power of dramatic construction was fast maturing, and he had his hands full of work, being engaged to write an opera for the Académie Royale, Paris, and another on the story of Rienzi, the last Roman tribune, for S. Carlo, Naples. But the composer's days were numbered. He died at Puteaux, near Paris, in 1835, aged thirty-four years. His body lies buried in Père la Chaise. Though Bellini's style was much simpler than Rossini's, and so recommended its simplicity that Rossini himself is thought to have modified the Corinthian splendour of his own style, by taking a hint from young Bellini's work for *Guillaume Tell* and the *Stabat Mater*, Bellini's music was even less calculated to brace and ennoble than the music of his celebrated predecessor. Bellini's operas are bred of the luxurious air of the soft south, and one of their chief charms to their admirers is the voluptuous languor in which the senses are steeped, and which steals away the very motive of action. Unlike Rossini, Bellini was a careful, painstaking worker, precise to scrupulousness.*

Gætano Donizetti was born at Bergamo, in 1798, three years earlier than Bellini, who, however, preceded Donizetti in achieving popularity. Donizetti's father was in good circumstances, and the boy received a fair education, including musical instruction, at the Lyceum of his native town. His father's intentions that Gætano Donizetti should be a lawyer were frustrated by the lad's preference for art; but the preference took at first, as in the case of Carl Maria Weber, the form of a love of drawing, and, indeed, versa-

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

tility was an element of mingled gain and loss throughout Donizetti's career. When his taste for music became well defined, his father procured for him the instructions of competent teachers, notably of the Padre Mattei, Rossini's master in counterpoint at Bologna. The elder Donizetti desired that his son should devote himself to church music as the highest branch of his profession, and the professors of which approach in dignity to the professors of jurisprudence. But young Donizetti, like young Rossini, had not the slightest inclination for those mysteries and heights of musical science which Handel and Mozart had loved from the first, but which the masters of the modern school were tempted to despise. He wrote a mass or two and other pieces for church music in the course of his studies, but he announced loudly and determinedly his intention of writing operas and operas only. A rupture with his father was the result, in consequence of which the passionate young man became a soldier,* as a means of asserting his independence. He soon rued the rash step which he had taken; but he did his best to retrieve it, by employing all his leisure while in garrison in writing his first opera of *Enrico di Borgogna*. This opera was produced at Venice in 1818, when Donizetti was twenty years of age, and was so far a success that it enabled him to procure his discharge from the army. His career was now decided. I can only give its outlines, and mention a few of its crowd of works. In the course of twenty-six busy years, Donizetti wrote no fewer than sixty-four operas and a mass of other music. Of the earlier operas M. Fétis remarks that "a great facility of composition made itself remarked in all these productions; but unfortunately the abuse of this facility, the

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

In 1835 Donizetti, then in his thirty-eighth year, had the great misfortune to lose the wife he had married two years before, who died of cholera, their two children having both died previously in infancy. The solitary man, with his keen passions always unrestrained, flung himself—now into a desperate entanglement of work, now into a far more desperate abandonment of dissipation, in order to forget his grief, and to rid himself of the remembrance of happier days. He appears to have treated his professorship as an honorary situation, since his absences from Naples became thenceforth frequent and prolonged. In the year of his wife's death Donizetti had for the first time left Italy, and gone to Paris in order to direct the performance of his *Marino Faliero* there; he had returned to Naples for the first representation of his *Lucia di Lammermoor;* then, after bringing out his *Belisario* at Venice, he performed the feat of translating the libretto from the French, writing the score, directing the rehearsal, and witnessing the first representation of the one-act opera of *Il Campanello*, all within the space of one week. This little opera was given for the benefit of the poor singers of a little theatre—the manager of which had become bankrupt, in Naples. After bringing out various new operas, including *Roberto Devereux*, Donizetti again repaired to Paris, this time to make a stay there. In the year 1838, he wrote for the French Opéra Comique and the Académie *La Fille du Régiment** and *Les Martyres*, adapting himself with great cleverness to French requirements. Another opera of Donizetti, known first as the *Ange de Nisidia*, but produced eventually as *La Favorita*, vindicated its last name. In 1842 Donizetti was appointed Kapell-Meister to the

* So associated with Jenny Lind's first appearance in England.

Imperial Theatre, Vienna, and there he produced his *Linda di Chamouni*. *Don Pasquale* was next brought out in Paris, and introduced in London in 1843. *Maria di Rohan* was given at Vienna, and *Don Sebastian* at the Académie, Paris, in 1844. Donizetti, at forty-six years of age, returned to Naples, to bring out in his own Italy the last work he was destined to give; this was *Caterina Cornara*. He went back by Vienna to Paris, where, in the following year, symptoms of his last fatal illness attacked him. The end of the man who had catered so indefatigably for the gratification and amusement of the public, and had composed so many effective and sometimes brilliant pieces, was a very sad one. Donizetti had preserved a warm, kind heart in the midst of his excesses, and his remorse must have been in proportion to the promise of his earlier days and to his lingering better qualities. The strain of work combined with the results of the dregs of that cup which he had elected to drink, to induce melancholy madness, which became so inveterate that in 1846 he was transferred to a lunatic asylum at Ivry. He remained in confinement more than a year, when his native air was tried; but an attack of paralysis seized him on the journey. He did reach his native town of Bergamo, where, "suffering an unknown sorrow, shedding ceaseless tears for an unreal grief, he lingered until a second paralytic stroke dealt him the blow of death."* Donizetti died in 1848, at the age of fifty years. A great crowd of his old fellow-townspeople and of mourners from the neighbourhood of his native town attended at the funeral of their musician; and his surviving brothers erected a monument to his memory in the Cathedral of Bergamo.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

"Instead of Beethoven," writes Moscheles from Germany, in 1844, "Donizetti is now the sun of the musical world. That sun does not warm me, nor does it light me forward on my path."

Of Donizetti's sixty-four operas, considering the manner in which they were written, the wonder is not so much that he did a great deal that was weak and meretricious, but that he did some things that were fine. The cosmopolitan nature of the man is seen in the themes which he chose, and it no doubt helped in his being generally appreciated; but there is this to add, that while such cosmopolitanism is not rarely found in the greatest men, it demands a large intellect to concentrate it, and to prevent its frittering away itself in mere clever, sympathetic many-sidedness. Probably, however, it was this power of putting himself in another place, country, and time, which lent to Donizetti's almost always superficial and often slipshod work, a certain graphicness and individuality, and aided in rendering some of his melodies popular as national songs.

CHAPTER VIII.

Croft, 1677—1727. Arne, 1710—1778. Bishop, 1786—1851. Clementi, 1752—1832. Cramer, 1771— . Field, 1782—1837. Woelfl, 1772—1814. Balfe, 1808—1870. Macfarren, 1813— .

WILLIAM CROFT was born at Nether Ealington, in Warwickshire, in 1677. He was educated in the Chapel Royal under Dr. Blow, and early named, in succession, organist to St. Anne's, Westminster, gentleman extraordinary of the Chapel Royal, and joint organist of the Chapel Royal with his master, Dr. Blow, until he had attained, at thirty years of age, the posts of organist of Westminster Abbey, "Master of the Children" and composer of the Chapel Royal. In 1715, Croft in his thirty-ninth year received the Oxford degree of Doctor of Music, when his exercises written for the occasion, and forming the setting to two odes—one in English and one in Latin—were performed in the theatre by the gentlemen of the chapel, with assistance from London.

Croft, as composer to Queen Anne, wrote, to celebrate Marlborough's victories, hymns and anthems—several of which are still performed in our cathedrals.

In 1724, when Croft was forty-seven years of age, he published by subscription his choral music in two volumes, called "Musica Sacra."* After leading a diligent and

* Croft had already published anonymously a book called "Divine

singularly blameless life in the discharge of his offices for twenty years, William Croft died in 1727, in his fifty-first year, it is said from an illness caused "by his attendance on his duty at the coronation of George the Second."

Croft's sacred music still holds its place among our church music, and, although inferior to that of the great masters, has elements of grandeur and much that is pathetic.

Thomas Augustin Arne was born in London in 1710. His father was a well-known upholsterer, in such prosperous circumstances, that he lodged at his house in King Street, Covent Garden, the Indian kings who were in this country in the reign of Queen Anne—according to a record in the *Spectator*, and sent his son to be educated at Eton. In his school young Arne became the torment of his companions, by his daily and nightly practisings on a cracked common flute. His education finished, his father declining to sanction the lad's musical predilections, articled him as a lawyer's clerk; but the ruling passion was so strong in young Arne that he privately procured a spinet, secreted it in his bed-chamber, and having muffled the strings with a handkerchief, set himself to play during the night, while the rest of the family were asleep. He borrowed a suit of livery, and in the disguise of a man-servant gained frequent admission to the gallery of the Opera House, which was then free to the lacqueys of the nobility and gentry patronising the aristocratic portion of the house. He succeeded in getting surreptitiously lessons on the violin from the musical director at Ranelagh, and so indefatigable and

Harmonies," which contained the words only of select anthems used in the Chapel Royal, Westminster Abbey, &c., &c., but had a preface giving a short account of church music.

independent of circumstances was his improvement of the lessons, that it led him into strange company, for he was once found practising his task "with his music-book on a coffin in which a corpse had just been deposited." It need hardly be added that he made rapid progress. At last the elder Arne, having called accidentally on business at the house of a gentleman in the neighbourhood, "found him engaged with company, but sending in his name, he was invited upstairs, where there was a large company and a concert, in which, to his great astonishment, he caught his son in the very act of playing the first fiddle."

The praise which young Arne's musical talents were receiving caused his father to forgive the concealment under which they had been cultivated. Eventually it reads like a pleasant comedy to find how young Arne, when he was permitted to pursue his course openly, brought over his whole family without loss of time to his pursuit, and infected the different members as by a spell with his special tastes. Recognising that his young sister, afterwards the famous singer, Mrs. Cibber, had a beautiful voice, the lad, who was so lately in urgent need of instruction on his own account, instructed her in turn, and enabled her to come out at the age of eighteen in the opera of *Amelia*, in Lincoln's-inn-Fields. Her success was so complete that it reacted on her brother, who wrote for her his first opera of *Rosamond*, produced in 1733, when Arne was twenty-three years of age, and which won more than its meed of popular favour. Immediately afterwards, he brought out, with his youngest brother for the hero, a clever little burlesque on the Italian opera, adapted from Fielding's *Tom Thumb*, or the *Tragedy of Tragedies*, and named the *Opera of Operas*, which was also exceedingly well received.

Three years later, Arne, at twenty-six years of age, had the assistance in his profession of marrying Cecilia Young, an accomplished singer, only less popular than his sister. In 1738, when he was twenty-eight years of age, he established his fame by composing and bringing out the music for the *Masque of Comus*, while his music for the *Masque of Alfred*, by Thomson and Mallet, given two years later, in 1740, privately, at the residence of Frederic Prince of Wales, to celebrate the anniversary of the Hanoverian succession and the marriage of the Princess of Brunswick, and publicly, in 1746, included the great national song of "Rule Britannia." In 1742, Arne and his wife went to Ireland that she might sing there. In 1744, Garrick engaged the composer for Drury Lane, where he soon after became "first violin." He and his wife began their services for this engagement in the theatrical recess at Vauxhall Gardens. Among much mediocre work which depended for success on his sister's singing, Arne, in the revival of Shakspeare's plays on the stage, set several of the lyrics to music, amongst others "Where the Bee Sucks"—produced for Vauxhall, and still retaining a high place among English melodies.

Arne's Oratorios of *Abel* and *Judith*, brought out in competition with Handel's great oratorios, made little impression in their own day, and are now forgotten. But it was not so with his opera of *Artaxerxes*, of which he wrote the libretto, and translated the text from Metastasio in 1762, when Arne was fifty-two years of age. This opera was an attempt to adapt to the English stage the Italian Opera, with its dialogue set to recitation and its "florid vocalization." English operas before this date had simply been acted plays, with an abundance of songs, glees, and

choruses introduced into the play.* The experiment not only held its place on the stage for eighty years, but the part of "Mandane" was long the test part to which English prime donne were subjected, before being permitted to pass muster. The copyright of *Artaxerxes* was sold for sixty guineas, then reckoned a handsome sum. In 1765, in the same year that he brought out his *Olimpiade*, an opera successful in its day, Mrs. Arne died. Arne himself died thirteen years later, in 1778, at the age of sixty-eight years.

When in the prime of life, Arne had received from the University of Oxford the degree of Doctor of Music, which his compeer Handel esteemed so lightly. His son Michael was a composer of less note and merit, though popular in his day; who, after ruining himself by the pursuit of the philosopher's stone (a singular enough pursuit for the close of the eighteenth century), redeemed his fortunes by his light work for Covent Garden, Vauxhall, and Ranelagh.

Thomas Arne was the first eminent English sonata composer after Purcell, and although endowed with less genius, and having only the scantiest musical education, Arne left his mark on English music, by the hold which his operas had on the English stage, and above all by his many thoroughly English melodies—fine in their own way.

Sir Henry Rowley Bishop was born in London in 1786. At an early age he was placed under a good teacher of music, in the person of Francesco Bianchi. In 1806, when Bishop was twenty years of age, his ballet of *Tamerlane et Bajazet* was brought out, it is thought, through the

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

friendly influence of his teacher, at the king's theatre. After achieving some success, and writing several more ballets, including that of *Caractacus* for Drury Lane, Bishop made a great advance in his opera of the *Circassian Bride*, brought out in 1809, when he was twenty-three years of age, and received with much favour, but which met with a great misfortune in the very moment of triumph. After the first representation, the theatre was burnt to the ground, and, among other "properties," the whole of Bishop's score perished.

The opera of the *Maniac*, of which some of the music is still known, was Bishop's next decided attainment, and was produced at the Lyceum in 1810. It helped to procure for him the profitable engagement of composer for Covent Garden Theatre, which he held when he was still considerably under thirty years of age. In successive periods of from three to five years, Bishop continued to occupy this post, which, with the contract for his copyright, secured for him, not merely early independence, but affluence, for fourteen years—the most brilliant period of his history as a composer. Among his many compositions of this period for Covent Garden are the much-prized *Miller and his Men*, played first in 1813, when Bishop was twenty-seven years of age; mangled adaptations of Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Figaro* and Rossini's *Il Barbiere* and *Guillaume Tell* (as *Hofer*), which are believed to have long spoiled the public ear for the entire works of the German and Italian masters; *Guy Mannering*, the best of a series of so-called operas from Sir Walter Scott's novels (the operas written in company with Whittaker); a *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the first of a set of Shakspearian pieces; the interlude to *The Royal Nuptials*, in honour of the marriage of

the Princess Charlotte in 1816; *The Law of Java*, containing the famous song of "Mynheer Vanduncк;" *Maid Marian*, and *Clari*, which has the air of one of the English public's favourite songs, "Home, sweet Home."

The Philharmonic Society was established in 1813, and Bishop was one of the original members, and occasionally acted (besides producing for it a cantata of little value) as conductor of the Society's concerts. He took a share in the direction of what were then called oratorios, but on trying them as the sole manager gave up the enterprise in the course of a year. In 1823, the term of one of Bishop's series of engagements to the manager of Covent Garden Theatre having expired, he was induced by the offer of higher pay—doubly welcome to him from his love of a life of pleasure and his extravagance, to desert the old scene of his labours and honours, and to go over to the rival house of Drury Lane, under the management of Elliston. But Bishop's best days as a composer were over. His early music produced spontaneously and often with great rapidity for the old English opera (which, as I have already said, was simply a play with much singing introduced into the framework of the story) was English and his own. In his maturity, he became, without sufficient knowledge, or, it might be, power to master or even to assimilate the influence, affected in turn by the most popular foreign masters, and the greater care and elaboration with which he worked only tended to render his music a more forced imitation of theirs. Bishop formed one of the many examples of the evil of early excessive prosperity which he could not retain, not even when he sought to earn it by the work that he had not been trained to bestow.

Bishop's *Faustus* was the best received of his work of this kind; his *Aladdin*, which was written to rival Weber's *Oberon*, was not a success.

Bishop made some return to his earlier and more characteristic style, as music-director, in an effort to bring back evenings at Vauxhall to their old high place among London pleasures. He wrote many songs, among them "My Pretty Jane,"* for Vauxhall, and for his second wife, Anne Rivière, a student of the Academy, whom Bishop married in 1831, when he was forty-five years of age, and who came out as a public singer at Vauxhall under her husband's management, and soon attained celebrity in her career. Though Bishop continued to write for various theatres, his reputation was fast waning, while his expenses had become so far in advance of his still ample income—for he was, as in former years, conductor of Drury Lane—that he became a pensioner on the wife with whom he did not live happily. She left him in 1839, eight years after their marriage, on the pretext of pursuing her profession in the chief cities of continental Europe and America, &c., while she provided funds for the maintenance of her children.

The same year a concert was given of Bishop's music in Manchester, and the proceeds were sent to aid the composer in his increasing difficulties, while the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Bachelor of Music. Another attempt was made to bring him forward in the old position which he had once held so triumphantly. Madame Vestris, in her management of Covent Garden, engaged him to write the piece called the *Fortunate Isles*, in honour of the queen's marriage; but an unfortunate delay prevented the

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

musical drama being given in time, and it proved the last of Bishop's operatic compositions.

It had become constantly clearer that his work, such as it was, was done, and his day past; still he did not want friends who would have aided him, if it had been possible to aid him. An old favourite of the public, and one who had won its favour by contributing largely to its entertainment in happier years, it was unwilling that he should sink into obscurity or penury. He received in succession appointments to the professorship of music in the universities of Edinburgh and of Oxford. In neither case, though he was little past middle life, did he take the least trouble to discharge the ordinary functions of the office. He had the degree of Doctor of Music from Oxford, as he had previously had the honour of knighthood from the queen in 1842, when he was fifty-six years of age. He was named Conductor of the Ancient Concerts, and he was chairman of the musical department of the Great Exhibition in 1851. He endeavoured to raise funds by giving musical lectures at various institutions throughout the country, but these lectures were of the slightest kind, neither likely to promote his reputation nor to secure for him permanent maintenance.

Bishop's creditors were at last becoming so pressing, that his friends were negotiating terms of compromise and getting up subscriptions on his behalf, when the composer died in 1855, aged sixty-nine years. In character Bishop was worldly, and at the same time reckless and improvident, with no high standard of principle. As a composer he lived in the transition period of the opera in England; and having led the public taste in the English opera to begin with, it is well said that he tried in vain to "follow" his

patrons in the opera remodelled on Italian principles, and inaugurated by Arne's *Artaxerxes*. His merit consists in his early English music, full of delightful natural melody and harmony, in glees and single songs. His works include the setting of many of Moore's Irish Melodies, a collection of Handel's songs made with care and extending to seven volumes, and a collection and republication of his own music.

Muzio Clementi, who achieved for the piano what Haydn did for the orchestra, and who is the father of the Sonata, which embodies the great principles of music, and adapts them to the piano, was born in Rome in 1752. His father was a goldsmith, working chiefly in gold and silver vessels for the church. The elder Clementi, a lover of music (probably the particular application of his profession brought him into special contact with church services), having some influence with the church authorities, eagerly welcomed and sedulously cultivated the first indications of musical genius in his little son. A relation of the family was a Maestro di Capello in one of the churches in Rome, and to his care and instruction Muzio Clementi was committed at the early age of six years, when, in the language of a biographer, "he began sol-fa-ing." At seven years he was placed under an organist to learn thorough bass, and at the age of nine years he passed an examination (in giving figured bass, executing an accompaniment, and transposing it into various keys), and was admitted an organist in Rome. Fétis adds, "The boy Clementi, in this examination, actually obtained a place as an organist," so that his precocity equalled that of Mozart and Mendelssohn.

Clementi's greatest master was Carpini, great in counterpoint, with whom Clementi studied during his eleventh and

twelfth years. Unknown to the master, the pupil composed a mass, which, on its being noised abroad and loudly commended, the master deigned to go and hear, remarking, with more reason in the dry remark than was, doubtless, often found in the rudeness of speech for which he was as notorious as he was famed for contrapuntal learning, "Why did you not tell me that you were going to write a mass; this is very well to be sure, but if you had consulted me it would have been better."*

At fourteen, Clementi's whole career, so far as the direction of his musical genius was concerned, was changed by one of those fancies of rich men who fill the office of patrons of genius. Mr. Peter Beckford, brother of the eccentric Beckford of Fonthill, author of "Vathek," and joint inheritor of Alderman Beckford's great wealth, was in Rome, heard and was charmed by the playing on the harpsichord of the lad Clementi, and offered to the goldsmith to carry his son to England and to promote his fortunes there, insuring him a provision till he should be independent of assistance. The offer was accepted, and Clementi was established with Mr. Beckford's family at his country seat in Dorsetshire, where so well did the patron discharge the obligation which he had voluntarily incurred, that the young Italian (a strange prodigy in an English country house of the period) diligently practised the harpsichord, and pursued alone his musical education, learned English from his command of a good English library and his intimate association with the family, and was encouraged to become a master of the classics as well as of modern languages.

* "Dictionary of Musicians," from the Works of Burney, Hawkins, &c., &c.

At the age of eighteen Clementi had not only surpassed all his contemporaries in his execution as a pianist; he had composed his second work, laying the foundation of the sonata and elevating piano—or, at that stage of the instrument's development, harpsichord-playing to the dignity of the highest music. In 1780 Clementi, at twenty-eight years of age, was able to repair to London, where his reputation as a musician had preceded him, and immediately secured for him in the opera a place which no longer exists—that of harpsichord-player. Clementi went to Paris in the same year (1780), when his playing won great applause, and where, according to Fétis, the impetuous admiration of the French, after the cold approbation of the English, made the pianist feel another man. From Paris he proceeded by Strasburg and Munich to Vienna. I have already referred to Clementi's playing along with Mozart before the Emperor of Austria, Joseph II. Mozart wrote his opinion of the performance in one of his home letters, and, while acknowledging Clementi's skill, denied—oddly enough in a man of Mozart's candour and generosity—to the performer the very quality of exquisite expression, which, with his "pearliness" of touch, was held by all other judges to be the crowning excellence of his music.

Clementi's tour did not last above two years, and for the next twenty years he remained almost entirely in London, an esteemed teacher, giving lessons at a guinea an hour, and never able to take in all the pupils who offered themselves, or were offered to him, at what was then a very high fee. In this interval Clementi composed many of his sonatas and his "Introduction to Pianoforte Playing," which became the standard work on the subject, and

formed the best pianists of the next generation. The generally prosperous tenor of Clementi's life suffered a brief interruption—which, as it happened, led in the end to further prosperity—by the failure of the firm of Longman and Broderip, through which Clementi lost a considerable sum in 1800, when he was forty-eight years of age. On the advice of his friends he sought to retrieve his fortunes by taking the principal share and becoming a partner, with Collard for his fellow-partner, in a music-publishing and piano-manufacturing business. This was successful, and under the guidance of Clementi was the means of introducing many improvements on the piano.

Clementi, from the time of his going into business, ceased to take any but professional pupils, two of whom were Cramer and Field. John Field brought against his master the charge of great parsimony in furnishing him with food and clothing, which were included in the articles of engagement—on signing which Field's relations paid the composer a premium of a hundred guineas. Field alleged that he had often to stay in the house for weeks at a time for lack of a hat, while his master received large fees for the discharge of duties which he intrusted to his scholar. But not only did John Field's subsequent career fail to constitute him the most trustworthy of witnesses, where questions of expenditure and steady living were concerned, but he himself gave the lie to his accusation, by professing the utmost personal attachment to Clementi, whose favourite pupil he was. Attended by Field, Clementi, two years after becoming the head of a commercial firm, and then a man of fifty years, made an extended professional tour as far as St. Petersburg, receiving on the way every mark of honour and distinction. At Vienna,

where Beethoven filled the place of Mozart, I have related how the great German and Italian, each labouring under a misconception with regard to his own dignity, and standing out on that misconception, refused to be made acquainted with each other, and contented themselves with silently flashing defiance from different sides of the same table d'hôte.

During a stay at Berlin, Clementi cheered his middle age by marrying a young and beautiful wife, and carried her with him to Italy; but, by one of those heavy domestic blows which contrasted strongly with his outward prosperity, he lost her through her death in childbirth within the year. To divert his grief he travelled again to St. Petersburg, taking with him his pupil Berger, one of the early teachers of Mendelssohn. Family affairs called Clementi subsequently to Italy, and the European wars prevented his coming back to England till 1810, after an absence of eight years, when he was in his fifty-ninth year. A year later he married a second time, an Englishwoman, Emma Gisborne, whose brother, John Gisborne, the engineer, was a friend of Shelley the poet, and whose sisters, Esther and Susanna Gisborne, married respectively John Varley and Copley Fielding, the well-known painters. Clementi was happy in his choice of a wife and in the children born to him. Still full of energy and of his peaceful art, in those stormy years when the western world was ringing with battle-cries, Clementi composed and published his "Gradus ad Parnassum," a suitable appendix to his "Introduction to Pianoforte Playing," which has been, like its predecessor, the great authority on this branch of music, since it is Clementi who has fixed definitely the principles of pianoforte fingering and execution.

Clementi was an original member of the Philharmonic Society, for which he wrote and played symphonies, that can bear to be mentioned among the symphonies of the great composers. He amassed a fair fortune in England, where he enjoyed every consideration due to his character and genius. Towards the close of his life he left the direction of his business to his partner, and retired to the country, to enjoy in his own country house the well-won repose of age. The composer Moscheles thus describes Clementi in those days, when Moscheles and his wife—a young German couple newly established in London—were wont to spend the Sundays with the old master and his family, at Clementi's place of Elstree, near London:—"Clementi is one of the most vigorous old fellows of seventy I ever saw. In the early morning we watch him from our window, running about the garden bareheaded, reckless of the morning dew. He is too lively ever to think of rest. At table he laughs and talks incessantly. He has a sharp temper too, which we set down to the hot blood of his Italian nature. He plays on the piano now but rarely, and gives out that he has a stiff hand, the result of falling out of a sledge when he was in Russia; but there is a suspicion that his unwillingness is caused by his inability to follow the great progress the bravura style has made since his time. His wife, an amiable Englishwoman, is a great contrast to him." . . . Collard (William) was a regular visitor at Elstree; and when the three friends met, Clementi would say, "Moscheles, play me something;" and the latter would choose one of his host's sonatas, while Clementi, listening with a complacent smile, his hands behind his back, his short, thickset fingers swinging to and fro, would call out at intervals,

"Bravo!" When the last note was over, he would tap Moscheles in a friendly way on the shoulder, and warmly congratulate him on his performance.—(*Moscheles's Life.*)

Clementi was summoned to London in 1827, when the musicians of the English capital, with his old pupil, Cramer, and Moscheles, at their head, gave a dinner in Clementi's honour. At the dinner he was placed between Sir G. Smart and Moscheles, and when Clementi consented, as "the father of pianoforte playing," to play to the company whose guest he was, he was led to the instrument by Smart, Cramer, and Moscheles. The excitement was great, as he had not been heard for years. He extemporised on a theme from Handel, and completely carried away the audience.—(*Moscheles.*) Clementi played yet again in public in 1828, at a party given by Moscheles, at which Sir Walter Scott and the singer Sontag were present.

"To-night I should like to play also," volunteered the veteran, and the offer was received with acclamation.

Mrs. Moscheles adds, referring to Scott's and Clementi's mutual pleasure in Sontag, "You should have seen the ecstasy of the two old men, Scott and Clementi; they shook each other by the hand." "And when you see the fine old gentleman, Mr. Clementi," writes Sir Walter, a little later, to Moscheles, "will you oblige me by remembering me to him?"

In his age Clementi sustained a second severe blow, like that which had left him bereaved and desolate, after his first short experience of wedded happiness—his eldest son was accidentally shot dead.

Muzio Clementi died in London in 1832, at the good old age of eighty years.

In Clementi's principal years as a teacher, he resided in

Titchfield Street, where Cramer attended him every morning. Clementi was wont in those days to preside over the concerts given by the nobility and gentry. Among his pieces, dedicated for the most part to the English ladies who were his patronesses, there are "Two Capriccios," dedicated to his second wife, and "Three Duettinos," to a young daughter, named aptly Cecilia Susanna. Clementi's compositions, besides his "Introduction to Pianoforte Playing" and its sequel, include one hundred and six sonatas (the finest of which is reckoned the "Didone Abbandonata"), the adaptation of much of Haydn's and Mozart's music for the piano, several orchestral symphonies, and a famous toccata. Upon one of his sonatas both Dr. Crotch* and Samuel Wesley delivered lectures in London.

Critics differ in some respects in their opinion on Clementi's compositions. According to a French authority they are "light, brilliant, full of elegance," while "his sonatas will remain long classic." "But one cannot deny that there is dryness in his music, and that it fails in passion," is the judgment of an English authority. However, there cannot be two opinions on the skill and taste of the master.

John Baptist Cramer, born at Mannheim in 1771, was the son of Wilhelm Cramer, one of the first violinists of his time in Germany, who came to England, became chamber musician to the king (George III.) and leader of the opera, being the conductor of the orchestra of eight hundred musicians, who performed at the commemoration of Handel, in Westminster Abbey, on the third anniversary of his death in 1787. Indeed there was a whole race of

* Dr. Crotch's oratorio of *Palestine*, produced in 1812, had sufficient merit to cause it to be revived this year (1874).

Cramer musicians, representing in a minor degree the Bachs of an earlier era. John Baptist Cramer, the subject of this sketch, was brought to England in early childhood by his father, and became in time a distinguished pianist, after the style of Clementi, whose pupil he was. While still a mere boy, he attracted the notice and regard of Haydn, during one of his visits to England. Cramer visited the Continent in early manhood, and was in Paris during the first outbreak of the French Revolution. From a young Russian, who had been a pupil of C. Emmanuel Bach's, and got into Cramer's debt, he received as payment of that debt the works in MS. of Sebastian Bach—a great treasure for a musician.

Cramer returned to England in 1791, and established himself as a music-teacher; in addition he played in public, attracting great admiration by his brilliance and taste. At the age of twenty-seven years, about 1798, Cramer again went abroad, making a musical tour of the greater part of Europe, especially of Germany, where he renewed his intimacy with Haydn, and won the friendship of Beethoven. Eventually Cramer returned to England, married and settled there, only visiting the Continent occasionally. Of Cramer, his countryman, Moscheles, wrote, "His interpretation of Mozart and his own Mozart-like compositions are like breathings 'from the sweet south.' . . . Cramer is exceedingly intellectual and entertaining; he has a sharp and satirical view, and spares neither his own nor his neighbours' foibles. He prefers to converse in French, and shows by his manners that he has spent much of his early life in France. He is one of the most inveterate snuff-takers. Good housekeepers maintain that after every visit of the great master the

floor must be cleansed of the snuff he has spilt, whilst I, as a pianoforte player, cannot forgive him for disfiguring his aristocratic, long, thin fingers, with their beautifully shaped nails, by the use of it, and often clogging the action of the keys. Those thin, well-shaped fingers are best suited for legato playing; they glide along imperceptibly from one key to the other, and, whenever possible, avoid octaves as well as staccato passages. Cramer sings on the piano in such a manner that he almost transforms a Mozart *andante* into a vocal piece, but I must resent the liberty he takes in introducing his own and frequently trivial embellishments." Cramer's works consist of celebrated exercises, together with many sonatas and other pieces for the piano and for stringed instruments. Connoisseurs held his compositions as marked by great elegance, and possessing intrinsic interest.

John Field, like Cramer, a pupil of Clementi's and another great pianist (known as Field of St. Petersburg from his nineteen years' residence in that capital, and to distinguish him from a namesake later in point of time, William Field, a well-known pianist of Bath), was born in Dublin in 1782. He also was of a musical family, though such are rarer in England than in Germany, his father and grandfather having been respectively a violinist and an organist. Young Field was placed under Clementi in London, accompanied him abroad, and was taken by his master, at Field's urgent request, to St. Petersburg, where he established himself as a music-teacher, being in the highest favour, and making enormous earnings which he squandered with wild prodigality. He married a French pianiste, from whom he separated. After nineteen years, Field removed to Moscow, and there the old Russian

nobility patronised him with even more lavish liberality. In 1831, Field, in his fiftieth year, returned, for the first and last time, to England, and played publicly in London. Of Field Moscheles writes, "Nothing can afford a more glaring contrast than a Field's 'Nocturne' and Field's manners, which are often of the cynical order;" and then the German tells the curious story—"There was such a commotion yesterday amongst the ladies, when at a party he drew from his pocket a miniature portrait of his wife, and loudly proclaimed the fact that she had been his pupil, and that he had only married her because she never paid for her lessons, and he knew she never would. He also bragged of going to sleep whilst giving lessons to the ladies of St. Petersburg, adding that they would often rouse him with the question, 'What does one pay twenty roubles an hour for, if you go to sleep?'" Naturally Moscheles has to add, "that though Field's delicacy and elegance, with his beauty of touch, were admirable, he lacked spirit and accent as well as light, and had no depth of feeling." Afterwards Field made a musical tour through Germany and Italy. In Naples he was attacked by illness, and his improvidence and intemperate habits having reduced him to utter poverty, on his recovery he was taken back, by the charitable kindness of a Russian family, to Moscow, where he did not succeed in recovering his former popularity. John Field died in Moscow, in 1837, at fifty-five years of age. His compositions included several concertos, and many pieces for the piano, including rondos, polonaises, variations on Russian airs, and a version of the once-popular air, "Go to the devil, and shake yourself."*

* About this time there was born in the little Highland village of

Joseph Woelfl, another eminent pianist and composer, was born at Salzburg, and had the advantage of studying the pianoforte and composition under the father of Mozart and the brother of Haydn. In his day he won a high place in Germany, France, and England as an executant and a composer. He married an actress of the National Theatre, Vienna. An unfortunate association with the German singer, Elmenriech, who became Woelfl's travelling companion, and who was a dishonest gambler, fatally compromised Woelfl's character: he was refused admission to respectable society, and, as a sad sequel to the brilliant beginning of his career, he died in obscurity and misery, near London, in 1714, in his forty-third year. Among Woelfl's music, which included operettas, but consisted chiefly of sonatas, were the sonatas, "With manly Heart," "Hark I hear the Evening Bell," "Heigho," "Polacca," &c.

Cipriani Potter was born in London, in 1792. He was a pupil of Crotch and Woelfl, and studied for a year in Vienna, where he submitted his compositions to the criticism of Beethoven. He was one of the original members of the Philharmonic Society, and at the opening of the Royal Academy of Music he was appointed Pianoforte Professor, becoming eventually principal of the Academy, and having the Potter exhibition, or musical scholarship, founded in his honour on his retirement from his office. His music is reckoned clearly defined and skilful. Among his works are his "Symphony in G Minor," overtures to

Inver, near Dunkeld, Neil Gow, who, as a famous "fiddler," lived to have—not to say a local, but—a national celebrity for the spirit, abandon, and tenderness with which he executed, composed, adapted, and improved on Scotch dance-music, especially the primitive Celtic reels and strathspeys.

Antony and Cleopatra, Cymbeline, and his cantata *Medora e Conrado.*

Michael William Balfe was born in 1808, in Dublin. His family shortly afterwards removed to Wexford. When a child of four years of age little Balfe attracted attention by the earnestness with which he listened to the performances of a military band, so that the band-master asked and got leave from Balfe's father to teach the child the violin, the first lessons being given when he was five years of age. In the course of six months the child composed a polacca for the band, and his father was so much impressed by the little boy's wonderful progress as to remove with him to Dublin, in order that he might have better instruction in music. He had the best teachers that Dublin could afford, and so benefited by their lessons that in 1816, when he was but eight years of age, he was brought out as a violinist at a concert in the Royal Exchange.

Between nine and ten years of age the boy Balfe composed a ballad, called "Young Fanny the Beautiful Maid." It was sold to a publisher for twenty printed copies. It became wonderfully popular, and, with words by Haynes Bayley set to it, was sung later by Madame Vestris in the comedy of *Paul Pry.*

Young Balfe added to his other gifts that of song, which he cultivated and practised throughout his life. He needed his various resources, as he was left dependent on his own exertions on the death of his father, which happened when Michael Balfe was sixteen years of age. He came at once to London, and soon earned both credit and means by his violin-playing at Drury Lane Theatre and elsewhere, while he took lessons from Horn, the

organist of the Chapel Royal and music-master of the princesses. About this time, in 1825, when Balfe was seventeen years of age, one of those pieces of good fortune, which befell the winning Irishman more than once in his career, met him. Young Balfe happened to be in company with a Count Mazzara, a Roman nobleman, an enthusiast in more respects than one. He was much struck, not only by the young lad's playing and singing, but by a personal resemblance which he seemed to bear to a son of the count's lately dead. The result was that the Count Mazzara offered to take Balfe with him to Italy, defraying his expenses. The offer was joyfully accepted. The first stage of the journey was Paris, where the count's high opinion of his protégé's talents was confirmed by the composer Cherubini, who volunteered to give the fortunate young man further lessons. Balfe, however, proceeded straight to Rome, where, living in the house of his patron, he studied counterpoint under the future head of the Conservatoire, Milan. Count Mazzara continued honourably faithful to the trust which he had imposed on himself, and even when he quitted Rome left money at his banker's for Balfe's use, and supplied him with introductions.

Balfe, who had stepped into many advantages with an ease which was liable to produce haste and carelessness, repaired shortly afterwards to Milan, where he studied singing, and wrote the music of the ballet of *Perouse*, which had appeared on the English stage before it was brought out at the Scala, where it was received with applause. Disappointed of an engagement to sing in the great Milanese Theatre, Balfe returned to London, and, failing in employment there also, crossed over to Paris, where Cherubini presented the young man to Rossini.

As director of the Italian Opera, Rossini agreed to give Balfe a very favourable engagement as principal baritone, provided he would consent to take a course of preparatory lessons, while that and his other expenses were defrayed in the meantime by an art-loving French banker. Balfe sang in Paris as Figaro, in 1828, and was well received. At the end of the season he returned to Italy, and found in Bologna a new patron, for whose birthday he wrote a cantata—so well thought of that it procured his admission as a member of the London Philharmonic Society.

In 1827, while singing at Palermo, Balfe, then in his twentieth year, wrote his first complete opera—it was said in the space of twenty days, to meet a quarrel between the manager and his choir. This opera, *I Rivali*, served its purpose, though it seems, naturally enough under the circumstances, to have been less meritorious than some musical additions to another composer's opera, which Balfe had already produced in Paris. The same year Balfe met in Bergamo and married Mdlle. Rosen, a German singer. While singing at Pavia and Milan, in the latter instance along with Malibran, Balfe brought out two more operas, and wrote the greater part of a third, the production of which was prevented by public events. After continuing his career as a singer, he arrived in London in 1835, when he was twenty-seven years of age. He was to make his first great hit there in an opera which had yet to struggle with extraneous difficulties, for the *Siege of Rochelle* was written for the Lyceum, and the theatre was closed by the bankruptcy of the manager before the opera was brought out. Eventually it was taken by the manager of Drury Lane Theatre, only to supply a gap in the theatrical programme. In spite of

all these vexatious and mortifying beginnings, the *Siege of Rochelle* proved a great success, and held the stage for more than three months.

Balfe's next work, under much more favourable auspices, was *The Maid of Artois*, produced at Drury Lane Theatre, and supported by the singing of Malibran, in 1836. One song in this opera, "The Light of other Days," became universally sung in England, while we are told that the final rondo was equally popular on the Continent.—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*)

The operas of Balfe's composition which immediately succeeded the *Siege of Rochelle* and *The Maid of Artois* were *Catherine Grey*, *Joan of Arc*, *Falstaff* (the first opera by an English composer brought out at Her Majesty's Theatre since the days of Arne), *Diadeste*, and *Keolenthe*. They were of varying, but, on the whole, inferior merit and success. An incident with regard to one—*Joan of Arc*—was, that while it was performed at Drury Lane Theatre the rival house of Covent Garden gave an opera by one of Balfe's old teachers. In the interval Balfe appeared as a singer in England, and then took the management of the Lyceum Theatre, where he brought out his wife as a singer before an English audience; but where, in spite of his efforts and partial success in a new opera, the management ended in bankruptcy. He withdrew to Paris, and settled for a time there, where he produced an opera, which was transplanted to England under the name of *Geneviève*.

Balfe was yet to attain his greatest success, which ranks him, at least, among the popular European composers. In 1843, when he was thirty-five years of age, he came again to London, and brought out (it is reported to have been composed three years before, and deposited with his

publisher when Balfe quitted England) at Drury Lane his best opera, *The Bohemian Girl*, the most highly and widely valued opera by an English composer. It did far more than recover to Balfe his position in England, for it extended his reputation to foreign countries. *The Bohemian Girl* has been translated and freely represented abroad, and has become a favourite in America. In the following year, 1844, Balfe wrote for representation in Paris *Les quatre Fils Aymon*, given in England as the *Castle of Aymon*, and the first of Balfe's operas produced in Germany In 1844 and 1845, Balfe composed his *Daughter of St. Mark* and *Enchantress* for Drury Lane Theatre. In the next year, 1846, he wrote *L'Etoile de Seville* for l'Académie Royale, Paris, and assumed the office of conductor of Her Majesty's Theatre, which he held for six years, till 1852. Within that period he brought out his *Bondman* and *Maid of Honour* at Drury Lane Theatre, and visited Vienna and Berlin (where he was offered the decoration of the Prussian Eagle) to superintend the representation of his operas there.

In 1852 Balfe brought out the *Sicilian Bride* and *The Devil's in It* respectively at Drury Lane and Surrey Theatres, and paid a visit to St. Petersburg, where he was entertained with honour, and secured high profits by his performances. An opera, called *Pittore e Duca*, designed by him for the carnival, was given at Trieste in 1855.

In 1856, Balfe, at forty-eight years of age, was once more in England, for the double purpose of introducing his daughter as a singer in the Italian Opera at the Lyceum, in 1857, and of bringing out by an English company his last important opera, *The Rose of Castile*, at the same theatre of which he had been the manager in

former days. At the state performances at the Queen's Theatre, on the marriage of the Princess of Prussia, in 1858, the pieces chosen for the Italian and the English company were *La Zingarella* (the Italian version of *The Bohemian Girl*) and *The Rose of Castile*, thus recognising Balfe as the English master of operatic composition.

Balfe still sang in public on such occasions as provincial tours, and wrote *Satanella* for the Christmas management of Covent Garden Theatre, in 1858. In 1859 he accompanied his daughter to Russia, but her career as a singer ended there with her marriage to Sir F. Crawford, the English ambassador. In 1860, Balfe was in London, superintending the representation of a new opera.—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*)

He died in October, 1870, in the sixty-third year of his age. His last opera, *Il Talismano*, has been given this year in London.* Balfe's gifts were very considerable,

* I subjoin portions of a criticism of *Il Talismano*:—"The *scena* of *Il Talismano* is a veritable creation. The music really individualises this character. It is grotesque without being exaggerated. . . . The tenor air, *Candide fiore*, the 'Song of the Rose,' is one of those ear-catching themes in which Balfe so excelled. It shows, indeed, that fatal fertility and facility which made him careless in his many preceding operas. . . . It is probable that the 'Prayer' and 'War-Song' of Richard, and the 'Romance of Sir Kenneth,' . . . .will interest the public. . . . . The courtly music in the Queen's tent is charming. The quaint romance sung by her is delicious; it is like one of the old French strains of Lulli or of Rameau, with a theme that, once heard, it is difficult to drive from the memory. . . . Balfe, had he lived, no doubt would have made many alterations in the book, and would have revised his score; but we must take the *Talismano* as it has been left by the composer, and the question whether it has the elements of vitality cannot be answered by a single hearing. Balfe has aimed at a transformation of style as regards orchestration, yet his Meyerbeer and Wagner effects are often crude and uncouth. There is much running about with the wood and brass, but the effects are overloaded and

though not of the highest order. They received cultivation, but he was the style of man who could not endure anything more than a superficial process of cultivation. With a fine ear for melody, quick, fluent, and having an abundance of practical experience, Balfe was well constituted for a popular, but not for a great, composer. As an artist he was careless and impulsive, without either much breadth or depth. Balfe's music, like Arne's and Bishop's music, was light and pleasing; nay, so far exceeded theirs in these popular qualities as to secure a more extensive renown. I give Moscheles's passing remark on Balfe's music of the *Siege of Rochelle*, that it was "light, after the manner of the composer himself, but cheerful and pleasing like the author."

John Barnett, born at Bedford, in 1802, had far fewer advantages, and did not achieve the success of Balfe; but Barnett also, while struggling with that grave obstacle of a deficient musical education, established distinct claims to musical genius. He is best known by his *Mountain Sylph*, a musical drama or English opera brought out at the Lyceum in 1834, when Barnett was thirty-two years of age, and which ended by becoming a success; *Fair Rosamond* and *Farinelli*, the latter produced after a residence at Frankfort-on-Maine, and some study of composition, were brought out at Drury Lane Theatre in 1837-38, but did not win any great favour. Eventually Barnett became a teacher of

exaggerated. Whenever and wherever Balfe resorts to his natural manner, that is, depends mainly on his inexhaustible vein of melody with simple accompaniments, he is himself and in his truest and best mood. The opera is, indeed, thoroughly tuneful, too much so for those who like tormented strains; and the many charming melodies to be found in the score may possibly compensate for the weakness of the book and for the occasional ugliness of the instrumentation."—*Athenæum.*

singing at Cheltenham.* Loder, in his *Mourjahad* and *Night Dancers*, and Vincent Wallace, in his *Maritana*, &c., &c., followed Barnett in the same line of art.

George Alexander Macfarren, come of an English musical family, was born in London in 1813. His father was a dramatic author of some little note in his day, and an amateur violinist. Young Macfarren was trained in the Royal Academy of Music, of which as a very promising pupil he became in his nineteenth year, in 1832, a sub-professor, and in 1834, when his studies were completed, a professor. In the same year he inaugurated the cheap popular concerts of the Society of British Musicians, by directing at one of the concerts the performance of his "Symphony in F Minor." Macfarren had already written operettas for various theatres, and in 1838 he brought out for the English Opera House (afterwards the Lyceum) his *Devil's Opera*, with the libretto written by his father. The work was so successful that the composer's next opera, *Don Quixote*, with the libretto still written by his father, was given at Drury Lane in 1846. In 1849, when he was thirty-six years of age, Macfarren produced at the Princess's Theatre his opera—on old English operatic models—of *King Charles the Second*, with Miss Louisa Pyne for one of the chief singers, and the composer's wife, who soon afterwards quitted the stage, for another new singer. The opera was very popular, and probably led to the establishment in 1850 of the "National Concerts," in opposition to M. Jullien's concerts, by a party of noblemen and gentlemen, who were understood to have in view the founding of a

* J. F. Barnett, the composer of the *Raising of Lazarus*, the *Ancient Mariner*, &c., &c., and his sister just come out as a pianiste, are the nephew and niece of the composer of the *Mountain Sylph*.

national opera. For these concerts, of which the large orchestra was led by Balfe, Macfarren wrote the cantata of "The Sleeper Awakened," from the "Arabian Nights;" a more successful cantata was that of "Leonore," on Bürger's ballad, performed ultimately at the Birmingham Festival of 1855. But the most successful, as it was the most English, of Macfarren's cantatas was "May Day," given at the Bradford Festival of 1856, when the composer was forty-three years of age. "Christmas," the composer's next cantata, has met with less general favour; but the popularity of the "May Day" in England has been fairly divided with the popularity of Macfarren's opera of *Robin Hood*, brought out and played for nearly a whole winter at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1860, with Madame Lemmens Sherrington, Mr. Sims Reeves, and Mr. Santley in the principal parts, and Mr. Charles Hallé presiding in the orchestra;* a later opera of Macfarren is that of *Helvellyn*.

In 1843 Macfarren established the "Handel Society," which however only lasted during four years, for the better production of Handel's works; and in connection with the Society he edited *Belshazzar*, *Judas Maccabeus*, and *Jephtha*. As a musical critic Macfarren has also come with great credit before the world, and as an analyst and a writer on harmony he has an established reputation. In the latter character the composer introduced a novelty on the existing systems, which, as he declined to modify or abandon his views in his teaching, caused his resignation, in 1845, of his office as professor in the Royal Academy; but six years later, in 1851, he was requested to resume his office, with the implied permission to teach as he thought best. Macfarren has directed his abilities to sacred music with such success,

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

that while a church service which he wrote for the cathedral church at Abingdon has been introduced in York Minster, and proved very acceptable, his oratorio of *St. John the Baptist*, given first at this year's Bristol Festival, has made a deep impression.*

Among Macfarren's extensive contributions to music for orchestra and piano, a prominent place is held by his overtures—some of them given by the Philharmonic Society, of "Chevy Chase," "Merchant of Venice," "Romeo and Juliet," and "Hamlet," and his "Quintett in G Minor for pianoforte and stringed instruments," played by Miss Arabella Goddard and Mr. Charles Hallé. Macfarren's songs include the music to many of Heine and Schiller's songs. He has aided Chappell in his "Popular Music of the Olden Time" and "Old English Ditties."—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*)

* Mr. Macfarren now labours under the affliction of blindness. His nephew, W. Macfarren, is also known as a composer.

CHAPTER IX.

Spohr, 1784—1859. Hummel, 1778—1837. Schubert, 1797—1828 Schumann, 1810—1856. Chopin, 1810—1849. Moscheles, 1794—1870.

LUDWIG SPOHR, the great violinist and composer, was born at Brunswick in 1784. He was the son of a physician. When Ludwig Spohr was two years of age, his parents went to live in the little town of Seesen, where the rector of the school first gave the little boy lessons on the violin. At seven years of age he got further lessons from a French emigrant, and by the time he was twelve years of age he had played a concerto of his own composition in public at Brunswick. Young Spohr had further, but by no means lengthened, instruction from teachers in Brunswick, where he was fortunate enough to win the favour of the Duke of Brunswick.

After Ludwig Spohr's confidence had failed in the very outset of a musical progress, which his father had proposed him to make for the purpose of supporting himself at the early age of fifteen, he received an appointment in the Duke's chapel, and was a few years afterwards placed, at his sovereign's expense, under the care of Franz Eck, the violinist, in order to travel with him for a year. The master and pupil (while the latter practised hard, and studied not only composition but French and drawing) made a tour

of the north of Germany, and, prolonging their journey into Russia, visited St. Petersburg. In 1803, young Spohr, then nineteen years of age, had finished his "Wandel Jafir," and was back in Brunswick, having made such good use of his time that he was able to present his royal master with Spohr's first violin concerto (op. 1), dedicated to the duke. In return, the duke appointed Spohr to be the first violinist in the royal chapel, where he took his younger brother Ferdinand to live with him, and be his pupil.—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*) When he was twenty-one years of age, Spohr made his next professional tour in Germany, and at one of his concerts in Berlin brought out the son of a rich Berlin family of the name of Beer, who was to be better known in time as the composer Meyerbeer.

In 1805 Spohr was appointed Kapell-Meister at Gotha; and in the following year, the young Kapell-Meister, who was then just twenty-two years of age, made a very happy and suitable marriage, having chosen for his bride Dorothea Scheidler, a fine harpist and pianist, the daughter of a court singer. Thenceforth his writings for the violin were interspersed with many pieces for harp and violin, to be played with his wife. Spohr's first opera was composed about the time of his marriage, but was never represented. His next opera he withdrew from the Weimar stage after it had been put in rehearsal. His third opera was produced at Hamburg in 1811; and his first oratorio was represented at Erfurt in 1812, but was never printed. The modest hesitation which Spohr had shown as a mere lad testified itself when he was a strong, muscular, manly young fellow, fond of vigorous exercise, in a resolute adherence to the highest standards and a devotion to artistic style; which

ended by making him, in spite of a defective education, the most artistic composer and the most polished violin-player of his day.

In 1812, Spohr, at twenty-eight years of age, became joint Kapell-Meister of the Theatre an der Wien, Vienna; and for this theatre he wrote his opera of *Faust* * in the following year, though it was not represented till three years later, and then not at Vienna, but at Prague, under Weber's directorship. The degradation of the theatre with which he was connected, to the representation of ballets and vaudevilles alone, caused Spohr's resignation. He spent part of next year living quietly in Switzerland, and composing pieces for his own playing.

In the end of 1816 Spohr made a tour through Italy, being everywhere successful. Nowhere was the great refinement and delicacy of his violin-playing more admired than in Rome, where his hearers, remarking his imitation of vocal effects, said, "he was the finest singer upon the violin that had ever appeared" (compare Beethoven's expression of making the piano sing). After making a tour in Holland, Spohr, in 1817, undertook the directorship of the Frankfort theatre, where he produced his *Faust*. He had proposed and partly composed an opera on the legend of the *Black Huntsman;* but hearing that Weber, who had brought out Spohr's *Faust* at Prague the year before, was engaged on a similar subject (in *Der Freyschütz*), Spohr wisely, as well as generously, gave up his idea.

* Spohr's *Faust* has by no means the popularity of Gounod's *Faust*, and it has been remarked that another essentially German subject, *Mignon*, has been successfully treated by another French composer in the person of Thomas.

Spohr made his first marked operatic success in the opera of *Zemire and Azor*, which was represented at Frankfort in 1819, when the composer was thirty-five years of age. This opera was produced with alterations in London twelve years later, in 1831. But Spohr's music was for the critics, and not for the general public, and so, in spite of his success, he quarrelled with the directors of the Frankfort theatre, and resigned his connection with it in the year 1819—the same year in which *Zemire and Azor* had appeared.

The following year, 1820, Spohr came to England, engaged by the Philharmonic Society, for which he conducted concerts, "being the first person that directed an orchestra in England with the bâton." * He gave an overture, which he had composed for the occasion, and one of his symphonies. His benefit concert occurred on the night of Queen Caroline's public entrance into London, when Madame Spohr made her only appearance in England and gave her last public performance. She was in a declining state of health, which lasted for years, during which Spohr composed his "Quintett in C Minor," for the purpose of inducing her to renounce harp-playing in favour of piano-playing, which would be less trying for her. In 1821 Spohr was appointed Kapell-Meister at Cassel, where he took up his residence. He brought out there in succession his operas, *Der Berggeist*, *Jessonda* † (highly esteemed), and *Der Alchymist*, which appeared later in England. In the meantime, in 1826, when Spohr was forty-two years of age, he composed and had performed on Good Friday his best oratorio of *Die Letzen Dinge*, which was given at the Norwich Festival

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

† On the French tragedy which he had happened to read.

of 1830, under its English name of *The Last Judgment.* His sacred cantata of "Vater Unser" (or "The Christian's Prayer") was performed three years later, in 1829.

In honour of the memory of his friend, Pfeiffer, the poet, Spohr wrote his symphony of "Die Weihe der Töne," known in England as "The Power of Sound." It was brought out at Cassel in 1833, and in England two years later. In 1834, Madame Spohr died, to the great grief of her husband, after an illness of more than fourteen years. Two years afterwards, in 1836, he sought to supply the blank in his home by marrying the sister of his late friend Pfeiffer. The year before, in 1835, he had brought out his oratorio of *Des Heilands letzte Stunden*, which is spoken of in England by the two names of the *Crucifixion* and *Calvary.*

Moscheles, who had much regard for Spohr, visited him at Cassel in Moscheles's musical tours. Of one of his visits he writes with effusion, "I am so delighted at seeing Spohr again: the consciousness that I understand this great man, the natural interest we take in each other's performances—all this is delightful. His garden is charming even in winter."

Spohr came to the Norwich Festival of 1839, and conducted the performance of the *Crucifixion* there, while he was engaged to write the *Fall of Babylon* for the next Norwich Festival of 1842, but was denied by the Grand Duke of Cassel the liberty of quitting the grand duchy in order to preside over its first performance. However, Spohr was allowed to visit England in 1843, when he was in his sixtieth year, and when he conducted one of the Philharmonic Society's concerts, and directed the performance, by the Sacred Harmonic Society, of his oratorio.

He wrote one more opera, which was a comparative failure, before he divided with Dr. Liszt the conductorship of the festival for the inauguration of Beethoven's monument in 1845, and celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of becoming Kapell-Meister at Cassel in 1847. The last festivity was kept with German simplicity and fervour. Spohr, to lovers of highly cultivated artistic music, especially of violin music, had become at Cassel what Cornelius, the painter, was at Munich—the attractive centre of a respectful crowd of pupils and admirers, from all Germany especially. In addition, the old man was much esteemed. Among other disinterested acts of his long, laborious, and honourable life, he had founded and directed the practice of the Cecilia Society for the cultivation of vocal music; and he had given up an annual benefit concert, to which he was entitled by the terms of his engagement, and put in its place a concert for the benefit of widows of members of the Grand Duke's orchestra. So the twenty-fifth anniversary of Spohr's establishment in Cassel was a fête-day in her little capital; the magistrates presented the composer with the freedom of their town; there was a grand performance of *Jessonda*, and at its close its aged composer was crowned with laurel.

Spohr paid still several visits to London, conducting concerts, directing the performance of his *Faust*, at the Royal Italian Opera, in 1852, and that of his *Jessonda*, in the same house, in 1853. The septett for the pianoforte and other instruments was his last published work. In 1857, at seventy-three years of age, Spohr resigned with dignity his office of Kapell-Meister, and "took leave of the orchestra which he had directed for thirty-five years," and, as he believed, of the public, after once more con-

ducting a performance of *Jessonda*. But while he lived in retirement, on the pension granted him for his services, he was persuaded twice again to appear at the head of an orchestra in conducting before his appreciating countrymen a performance of *Jessonda*, at the Prague Festival of 1858, and at a concert of his music, given in his honour, at Meiningen, in 1857. He died at Cassel, in 1859, aged seventy-five years.* In person Spohr was tall and muscular, and he retained his active habits in old age till he broke his arm by a fall received on the ice in the winter preceding his death. His music, besides his operas and oratorios, includes nine symphonies, the finest of which, like those of Beethoven and Mendelssohn, express a definite purpose in the composer. The eighth symphony illustrates "Earthliness and godliness in the life of man," and was produced, soon after its first appearance in Cassel, in London. His "Historical Symphony" gives four musical epochs, just as his symphony of the "Seasons" represents spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Spohr is the great composer for the violin: to him it owes the "violin-school" fifteen concertos, besides numerous smaller concert pieces and no less than thirty-three quartetts. He considered himself, with some pride, the originator of the double quartett. With his genuine devotion to art as art, it might be that Spohr's cultivation exceeded and somewhat overpowered his invention. Like his great German predecessors whom he so ardently admired, Spohr, while less originally endowed, is also the composer for the thoughtful and highly educated; for them his *Letzen Dinge* has all the classic charms which belong to learning and taste, in combination with musical faculty.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

Johann Nepomuk Hummel, the eminent pianist and composer, was born at Presburg, in 1778. He went to Vienna, and became a pupil of Mozart's. His playing was remarkable for the best qualities (including the singing effect he produced on the pianoforte) and the absence of all tricks of style. Even his personality was devoid of mere superficial attraction, for he is described as of "heavy figure" and with "careless dress." His compositions are considered by judges necessary for the perfect study of his peculiar instrument. It is notable in the history of Hummel, and in connection with the oblivion into which his operas, *Mathilde de Guise*, *Das Haus ist zu Verkaufen*, &c., have fallen, that his father, director of the Military School of Music at Presburg, sought in vain to teach his son as a little child to play the violin. Hummel's works include his cantata "Diana ed Edimion," his famous "Septett in D Minor," and his sonatas. His "Method" is a standard work of instruction for the piano. Hummel died at Weimar, in 1837, in his sixtieth year.—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*)

Franz Schubert, the great lyrist, was born at Lichenthal, a suburb of Vienna, in 1797. "In the parish of Lichenthal, Vienna," writes Mr. Haweis, "the inhabitants are fond of pointing out a house commonly known by the sign of the 'Red Crab,' which, in addition to that intelligent and interesting symbol, bears the decoration of a small grey marble tablet, with the inscription, 'Franz Schubert's Geburt-Haus.' On the right hand is a sculptured lyre; on the left, a wreath, with the date of the composer's birth, January 31, 1797." His father was the schoolmaster of his native village, and, according to Mr. Haweis, had eighteen sons and daughters, the most of

whom died in infancy and childhood. Franz was the second son, and shared the family passion for music. His general education was begun betimes. "When he was five years old," Mr. Haweis quotes from Franz Schubert's father, "I prepared him for elementary instruction, and at six I sent him to school; he was always one of the first amongst his fellow-students." The old schoolmaster was his boy's first instructor in music, as in everything else, when the teacher found that the pupil "had somehow mastered the rudiments for himself." The choirmaster, who was Schubert's next master, observed that "whenever he wanted to teach him anything, he knew it already;" and Salieri, to whom he owed most information, admitted that the boy "was a born genius, and could do whatever he chose." Mr. Haweis, who supplies these particulars in his book "Music and Morals," argues from this early and extraordinary musical development, similar to that of Mozart and Mendelssohn, that "nature seemed to feel that a career so soon to be closed by untimely death must be begun with the tottering steps and the early lisp of childhood." But, no doubt, the precocity, with its premature undisciplined independence, had its serious disadvantages; and it is well known that Schubert before he died deeply regretted, and was taking earnest steps to remedy, his defective knowledge of counterpoint and of the higher branches of the study of music. His superficial practical acquaintance with music was made so speedily that, at the age of eleven, he was not only a good singer in the choir of the imperial chapel, but played well on the piano and other musical instruments; and before he was fifteen he was so unexceptionable a violinist, that he could take the part of "first violin" in the orchestral

practisings.* A little earlier, from the time he was thirteen, he had written music very freely, so that "his consumption of music-paper was something enormous." His early works included overtures, symphonies, quartetts, &c., which were composed in the intervals between his other studies, so that "adagios had to be written between the pauses of grammar and mathematics, and prestos finished off when the master's back was turned, while they were performed at the evening concerts of the school—a free grammar school where poor students were boarded gratuitously."—(*Haweis.*) The English authority from whom I am borrowing largely, declares that there was nothing beyond his devotion to music to distinguish Schubert from other boys; that he was a dutiful son, not discontented with the narrow income of his family, but light-hearted and fond of society and amusement. M. Fétis, on the contrary, states that from Schubert's early manhood, at least, "a habitual melancholy was the dominant trait in the character of the young artist, and that music alone could distract him from it, and bring to him an expansive enthusiasm;" while Mr. Haweis himself refers to the inconsistency of the mournful titles of Schubert's first pieces,† and remarks that they "seem to fall across the spring-time of his life like the prophetic shadows of coming sorrow and disappointment;" neither does the English differ from the French author in recognising the sombre humour which hung about Schubert in riper years —if one can call those years ripe which terminated before middle life.

On leaving the imperial choir, in 1813, when he was

* Fétis.

† *A Complaint, Hagar's Lament, The Parricide, A Corpse Fantasia.*

sixteen, and parting from his master Salieri, Schubert returned to his father's house, and sought to maintain himself by giving lessons, as well as by the often unremunerative occupation of composition. M. Fétis, in recording the musical powers of the Schubert family, writes of their family concerts at this time, when they would perform quatuors, Franz Schubert's brothers (one of whom, his elder brother Ferdinand, was afterwards professor of music in St. Anne's Normal School, Vienna, and one of the best organists in the city) playing the violin parts, Franz himself assuming the alto, and their father undertaking the violoncello. For his private individual studies Franz Schubert had the works of Mozart and Beethoven. In those days Schubert composed some of his best and most original songs, among them "The Songs from Ossian."

Schubert had already begun to write operas, the earliest of which bore a strong reflection of Mozart's influence, and none of which show the composer to advantage. Want of concentration and arrangement, and an absence of stage tact, are said to spoil operas which, in addition, have not enough sustained power to enable them to triumph over their defects.

In 1816, Schubert, then nineteen years of age, wrote what was to prove one of his greatest successes, but which, like his other successes, received only a gradual acknowledgment. Mr. Haweis has this account of the composition of the now-famous air of the "Erlkönig:"—"One afternoon, Schubert was alone in the little room allotted to him in his father's house, and happening to take up a volume of Goethe's poems, he read the 'Erlkönig.' The rushing sound of the wind, and the terrors of the en-

chanted forest, were instantly changed for him into realities. Every line of the poem seemed to flow into strange unearthly music as he read, and, seizing a pen, he dashed down the song nearly as it is, in just the time necessary for the mechanical writing." In the same year, Schubert tried and failed to get a small musical appointment, at Laibach, under government, with the modest salary of twenty pounds a year. The first of Schubert's operas which was played was *Die Zwillinge*. It was brought out at the Court Theatre, Vienna, in 1820, when Schubert was twenty-three years of age, and was followed in the same year by his melodrama, with choruses, of *Die Zauber Harfe*. But neither this nor any other of his operas (one of them bearing the peculiarly German name of *Das Teufelslustschloss*), most of which were written before this time, and few of which were publicly performed, attained any success.

In the meantime, Schubert had left his father's house to lodge in the house of a friend, named Schober, of whom, and of the little knot of congenial allies and associates who gathered round Schubert, Mr. Haweis gives graphic sketches. Schober, a bachelor, living with a widowed mother, was a poet, but not specially musical, unless in the interests of his friend. Gatry, on the contrary, was an eminent pianist, with whom Schubert studied Beethoven's symphonies for four hands, and played his own fantasias, &c. Mayrhofer, a poet, like Schober, "was constantly writing poetry, which Schubert was constantly setting to music:" with a temperament at once sensitive and reserved, he became a victim to nervous hypochondria, and at last destroyed himself by springing from a window at the top of the house, in which his government office was

situated, into the street below. Not the least of Schubert's friends were the brothers Huttenbrenner, of whom, in their relation to Schubert, Mr. Haweis records that "to the end of his life they fetched and carried for him in the most exemplary manner: they puffed him incessantly at home and abroad; they bullied his publishers, abused his creditors, carried on much of his correspondence, and not unfrequently paid his debts; they were unwearied in acts of kindness and devotion to him, never frozen by his occasional moroseness, never soured or offended by the brusqueness of his manner. They have still in their possession many of his MSS., every scrap of which they have faithfully preserved, with the exception of two of his early operas, which the housemaid unluckily used to light fires with." It was of one of these only too accommodating yet constant friends that Schubert complained, "The fellow likes everything I do."* But Schubert's best friend probably was the operatic singer, Vogl, twenty years Schubert's senior, of whom Mr. Haweis tells us that, after having been brought up in a monastery, nearly a quarter of a century of operatic singing in Vienna had not been enough to deprive Vogl of his habits of religious meditation, so that he was often to be met, with a volume of the New Testament, Marcus Aurelius, or Thomas à Kempis in his hand. This worthy man acquired considerable power over the young composer, for whom Vogl exercised his own fine gifts, and employed the influence of his reputation in Vienna, by singing Schubert's songs in the best company in the city, in which the operatic singer was not only welcome but held in high respect.†

* "Music and Morals."

† Schubert went among his companions by the name of "Kan-

However, Schubert was foiled in his great aim of being an operatic composer, though he wrote songs which Vogl sang, and others besides Vogl began to value. He was a disappointed young fellow, without question: the most of his neighbours thought he had reason for his disappointment. He was very poor, for the publishers and music-sellers were slow to buy, and when they did buy only allowed small sums for those melodies which are now regarded as gems of song, superior even to the "Songs without Words" of Mendelssohn. Schubert had no tact to disarm the prejudices and inform the ignorance of "the trade;" he had no cultivated sympathies or courteous manners for society. Indeed, like Beethoven, without his commanding personal influence, Schubert was apt to be gruff and sullen, not merely in company, but with his most intimate friends; so that it required the mention of music to inspire him, or the performance of a duet in which he took a part to "warm him" into an instructive or pleasant companion. He was unprepossessing in his personal appearance. He had remained so obscure a young man in Vienna that, in Mr. Haweis's words, "whilst drawing-room plaudits were often freely lavished upon some gifted singer, few thought of thanking the stout, awkward, and silent figure who sat at the piano and accompanied the thrilling melodies which had sprung from his own heart."

In these circumstances, in 1818, when Schubert was twenty-one years of age, he was induced to enter the household of the Hungarian, Count Esterhazy, a descendant of the family in which Haydn had been happily domesticated as Kammer-Musikus. Schubert's post at first, while

e-was," because of his habit of asking, when he met a man for the first time, "Kann er was?" ("What can he do?)"

the family were in Vienna for the winter, was that of music-master, in exception to an unwise, intolerant rule which he had soon adopted of refusing to give music-lessons. The Esterhazy family were, like Schubert's own family, devoted to music, and capable of furnishing charming family concerts, in which Princess Marie, the elder daughter, sang the soprano; Princess Caroline, the younger daughter, and her mother, the Countess Esterhazy, contralto; Baron Schönstein, the family friend, the tenor; and the count, the bass.* To such a gifted and accomplished family Schubert naturally became Kammer-Musikus as well as music-master, furnishing the members with fine materials for their concerts in some of his best quartetts, such as "The Prayer before the Battle," "Abendlied," "Morgen Gruss." When the season came for the family to quit Vienna, they could not dispense with Schubert's services, but carried him with them to their castle among the Styrian hills; and there, without care for the present, in the comparative freedom of country life, amongst picturesque, lovely scenery, enjoying the open air and exercise which his physicians later prescribed emphatically for him, it is probable that Schubert's happiest days were passed. The social gulf between the patron and the Kammer-Musikus remained as real and, in one sense, as insurmountable as when the inferior position sat so lightly on good-humoured Joseph Haydn; but a revolution had shaken society to its centre in the interval, many conventionalities had been relaxed, so that Schubert led more the life of an equal and a friend in the Esterhazy family. In close intercourse Schubert's genius and his warmth of heart and generosity caused his plain

* "Music and Morals."

person and his asperities of temper to be forgotten and forgiven. He was very fond of the younger daughter, Princess Caroline, a little girl of eleven years, who would reproach him with never having dedicated anything to her, when he would answer, "What's the use, when you have already got all?"

Poor Schubert, in the monotonous adversity and comparative sordidness of his young life, seems to have magnified this little romance with its child-mistress, and his biographers have followed his example.

In 1822, four years after his pleasant summer in the country, and while he still preserved very friendly relations with the Esterhazy family, Schubert, at twenty-five years of age, wrote his grand opera in three acts of *Alphons and Estrella*, which, like his other operas, proved "practically a failure." In the next year, 1824, he wrote another grand opera, *Fierabras*, which was "neither paid for nor performed." As some consolation, Schubert spent this summer and autumn also in the country with the Esterhazy family. Princess Caroline had grown into a young girl of sixteen, for whom he still professed a wholly fanciful homage; but her sister, three years older, who had come nearer to rational intercourse between these daughters of a princely house and their music-master, the son of the people, was his real companion and his kind considerate friend.

Returned to Vienna and his old life, Schubert's struggles brought him no nearer prosperity; neither had any reputation which he had acquired extended beyond Vienna. He had sent Goethe many of the poet's songs matched with an exquisite setting, and had not even received an acknowledgment of the offering. "For thirty years Schubert

and Beethoven had lived in the same town and never met," and, even after they did meet, the shyness of the one and the deafness of the other prevented their arriving at any cordial understanding. Schubert worshipped Beethoven at a distance (Schubert would exclaim in despairing enthusiasm, "Who could hope to do anything after Beethoven?"); and Beethoven did not appreciate Schubert till Beethoven's last illness.* But, though saddened and soured by the slight esteem in which, as it appeared, he and his works were held in the great world, and by the difficulties into which the world's neglect threw him, until he passed from one extreme of "fits of melancholy and abstraction, during which he would wander into the country, and there find relief in thinking of music," to the other extreme of plunging into conviviality and indulging in intemperate habits, which rapidly sapped a constitution that never was very sound, † there was nothing mean or small about Schubert even in his gravest errors: he not only

* In 1827 Beethoven was dying. He had heard with surprise that Schubert had composed more than five hundred songs, and spent some of his last hours in reading them (the only way in which they could reach him) over and over, exclaiming, "I too should have set this music." Schubert came, with one of the brothers Huttenbrenner, to inquire for the master. "Beethoven was lying almost insensible; but as they approached the bed, he appeared to rally for a moment, looked fixedly at them, and muttered something unintelligible. Schubert stood gazing at him for some moments in silence, and then, suddenly bursting into tears, left the room. On the day of the funeral Schubert and two of his friends were sitting together in a tavern, and, after the German fashion, they drank to the soul of the great man whom they had so lately borne to the tomb. It was then proposed to drink to that one of them who should be the first to follow him; and hastily filling the cup, Schubert drank to himself."—*Haweis.*

† "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

paid the deepest, most sincere homage to the great maestros; he also praised heartily both Weber and Rossini, though the first called Schubert a dolt, and "Rossini at least was flaunting his plumage in the sunshine while he, Schubert, was withering in the shade."—*Haweis.*

In 1826 Schubert tried for, and again failed to get, a regular post as vice-organist at the Imperial Chapel. The chapel-master had never so much as heard of Schubert's name. In 1828 Schubert's works included the completion of his "Symphony in C," his "Quintett in C," and "Mass in E flat." He gave his first and last concert, which was attended by such crowds as spoke of success dawning at last. But his health was failing to such a degree, that he suffered from constant headache and sense of exhaustion. He had a severe illness, during which it was said that "he reflected earnestly upon his deficiencies as a man and as a musician, and that he came forth from his sick-room with strong resolves for a worthier future."—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*) He took the manly resolution to go through a course of strict contrapuntal study, in order to remedy his faults of construction, and went so far as to put himself under the master, Sechter. "He had an equally high purpose in his new rule of life," but he was not spared to test his determination. Another illness attacked him, under which he sank in a few days. Schubert died at Vienna, in 1828, aged thirty-one years.

Schubert is buried near Beethoven, whom he followed so soon to the grave, in the Gottesacker of Währing. The following inscription is engraved beneath the bust upon his tomb:—"Music buried here a rich possession, and yet fairer hopes. Here lies Franz Schubert, born January 31, 1797; died November 19, 1828; aged thirty-one years."

Mr. Haweis thus describes Schubert's personal appearance—"He was short, with a slight stoop; his face was puffy, and his hair grizzled; he was fleshy without strength, and pale without delicacy."

By the time Schubert died, Vienna had discovered his genius. Forty years have elapsed since then, and not Vienna alone or Germany, but the civilized world knows that a great lyrist, rich in fancy, melody, and power, walked his short span, for the most part unknown and disregarded, and often forlorn enough, among his fellow-men. Schubert's high reputation rests chiefly on his songs: with regard to them M. Fétis writes—"He gave proof of genius, and created a style in which he has many imitators, but no rivals; each of these little pieces becoming by his inspiration an entire drama, in which the novelty of the melody, the correctness of the expression, and the details of the accompaniment unite to form a whole often complete and perfect. A creator in this department, he has attached his name to it in a manner to render it imperishable." "Into the region of song," Mr. Haweis remarks, "Schubert found himself forced almost against his will. He could get himself heard in no other, and this after all proved to be the sphere in which he was destined to reign supreme. His inspirations came to him in electric flashes of short and overwhelming brilliancy. The white heat of a song like the Erl-King or 'Ungeduld' must have cooled if carried beyond a song."

Schubert left a great mass of work. In Haweis's words, if the composer had lived long enough, "he would have set the whole German literature to music." The consequence of such an abundance of work so rapidly performed—especially where the songs are not concerned—is considerable

inequality, and the serious drawback that Schubert, besides refusing to accommodate his composition to public taste—a resolution which might not have been a mistake—had neither learned to concentrate nor to prune his work—one secret of the failure of his operas. M. Fétis observes of Schubert's music apart from his songs, that it contains beautiful things, but has not the "seal of creation" which is to be found in his songs. Herr Pauer writes with greater appreciation of Schubert's general music: the critic says, "His (Schubert's) sonatas do not possess the conciseness and finish of Beethoven's, but the ideas are beautiful; their worst fault is prolixity. His pianoforte music is far healthier than Chopin's, and must rank next after Beethoven's." Again Herr Pauer bears witness, "His melodies are distinguished by spontaneity, freshness, and nervousness, and his harmonies are original and powerful; he could find a musical expression for every shade of feeling." The same authority holds Schubert's songs superior to Mendelssohn's "Lieder ohne Wörter." The most approved of his works, apart from his songs, are the "Symphony in C," the "A Minor Sonata," and the cantata of "Prometheus." Schubert left three unfinished operas.

Beethoven's favourites among Schubert's songs include "Iphigenia," "The Bounds of Humanity," "The Young Nun," and "The Miller's Song." Other specially admired songs of Schubert's are "Ave Maria," "Hark! hark! the Lark," "Anne Lyle," and "The Wanderer."

The song of the "Erl-Konig" is said to have realised thousands of pounds to the publishers. It was sung to Jean Paul Richter, at his own request, a few hours before his death. Two years before Goethe's death, and two years after Schubert's death, the same song was sung to

Goethe by an accomplished vocalist, when the aged poet, who had made no acknowledgment to the composer, was so moved as to take the singer's hand, kiss her forehead, and say, "A thousand thanks for this great artistic performance. I heard the composition once before, and it did not please me; but when it is given like this, the whole becomes a living picture."—*Haweis.*

Robert Franz, born in 1815, at Halle, and Professor of Music in that university, is included among the great German song-writers. The popularity of his songs, still increasing, is great in America.

Robert Schumann, another great lyrist, was born at Zwickau, Saxony, in 1810. His father was a bookseller; and young Schumann was carefully educated, first at the college at Zwickau; and afterwards at the University of Heidelberg. His father intended him to follow the legal profession; but Robert Schumann had composed music from his twelfth year, having arranged the 105th Psalm for an orchestra, written fragments of operas, &c., and on the advice of Herr Wieck—destined to become one of Robert Schumann's nearest relations—the lad devoted himself to music-practising and pianoforte-playing so zealously that he disabled one of the fingers of his right hand. His first serious service to music was given as an editor and critic, in which capacity he established a valuable journal, the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik,* at Leipsic.

But he did not forsake composition, and, after his gifts had been so cultivated and matured as to enable him to be independent of his early models, he struck out an independent style, so bold and occasionally so bizarre as to offend some, while it fascinated others; but of the spirit and beauty of his songs, to which the words of Burns and Heine

were set, and which have a place of their own, like Schubert's songs, there could not be two opinions. Some of these songs, and some of Schumann's pianoforte pieces, according to Herr Pauer, "have taken a greater hold on the people in Germany than anything of Mendelssohn's." Schumann was not only a man of general cultivation, like Mendelssohn; he was in his own sphere quite as genuine, and perhaps, so far as the sphere went, a more empassioned artist than his great countryman. Schumann aided largely in bringing about the final appreciation of Schubert in Germany.

Schumann married, in 1840, when he was thirty years of age, the fine pianiste, Clara Wieck, who, as Madame Schumann, is one of the best executants of the day, so that her rendering of Beethoven's "Moonshine Sonata" can rank with Charles Hallé's.

In Moscheles's life there are these references among many others to the Schumanns (the Wiecks had been very old friends of Moscheles, and in former years the distinguished pianiste had been "the little Clara" of the composer's familiar acquaintance). The meetings referred to happened at Leipsic, in 1834, six years before Robert Schumann and Clara Wieck's marriage. "I visited the Wiecks, and Clara played to me a good deal, amongst other things a manuscript sonata by Schumann—very laboured, difficult, and somewhat intricate, although interesting music. Her playing was admirable, and void of all affectation. . . . . In the evening I was again at the Wiecks' to meet Schumann, who is a retiring but interesting young man.* Again I made Clara play to me,

* "It may seem strange that I should not have mentioned Schumann, whom Mendelssohn thought so highly of; but at that time he lived in greater retirement than usual, and hardly ever left his room. His

and again she distinguished herself. I gave them a taste of my extempore playing. . . . . We were invited to the Wiecks' to meet Schumann and others. Clara Wieck played in Beethoven's great trio superbly. . . . . I have just come from the Wiecks', where Clara played admirably in one of Schubert's trios. Bach's concerto for three pianos, performed by her, Felix (Mendelssohn), and myself, was very interesting."

After residing for five years in Dresden, Schumann was appointed musical director at Düsseldorf. In 1854 his mind became affected, so that he had to be removed to a lunatic asylum near Bonn. Robert Schumann died two years afterwards, in 1856, at Andernach, in the forty-seventh year of his age.

His musical works, particularly his pianoforte pieces, were extensive, and included compositions of much originality and beauty. In addition he left various quartetts and quintetts for stringed instruments, and symphonies, of which that in "E flat" is held in great esteem. His single opera of *Geneveva* was a failure, while one of his cantatas, that of "Paradise and the Peri," is justly admired on every side. It was given by the Philharmonic Society, London, in 1856, the year of the composer's death. Of Robert Schumann as an artist, Herr Pauer writes, "All who love musical art will reverence the name of Robert Schumann. . . . . His works appeal to an intelligent audience, cultivated by poetry, and are best appreciated by small societies—what the French call *petits comités*. We have not all the clearness

paper, his songs, but above all his future marriage with Clara Wieck, completely occupied him."—FERDINAND HILLER, in *Macmillan's Magazine.*

and grace of Mendelssohn, but we have far more depth." Herr Pauer includes Schumann's with Schubert's songs, in preferring both to Mendelssohn's "Songs without Words."

Frederic François Chopin was born at Zela-zowa-wola, near Warsaw, in 1810, the same year that Robert Schumann was born. Chopin's family were of French extraction, and were not in prosperous circumstances. He himself was a delicate petted child, whom spoiling only rendered more quiet and gentle—a child "always suffering and never complaining." At the age of nine years he began to hear music, without showing any special capacity, though in the following year the great singer, Madame Catalini, was so attracted by the boy as to give him a watch. Through the influence of a Polish patron, Chopin entered the Musical College, Warsaw, where his talents began to be developed, until at the age of sixteen he was the favourite pupil of Elsner, the director of the Conservatoire. Mr. Haweis tells us that, while a student, Chopin made many friends among the nobility, and "assumed without any effort that position in society which he ever afterwards retained, and for which nature had so peculiarly fitted him." Mr. Haweis adds a sketch of young Chopin from the pen of George Sand:—"Gentle, sensitive, and very lovely, he united the charm of adolescence with the suavity of more mature age. Through the want of muscular development he retained a peculiar beauty, an exceptional physiognomy, which, if we may venture so to speak, belonged to neither age nor sex, ... it was more like the ideal creations with which the poetry of the middle ages adorned the Christian temples. The delicacy of his constitution rendered him interesting in the eyes of

women. The full yet graceful cultivation of his mind, the sweet and captivating originality of his conversation, gained for him the attention of the most enlightened men, while those less highly cultivated liked him for the exquisite courtesy of his manners."

"His appearance," writes Moscheles of Chopin a little later, "is completely identified with his music: they are both delicate and sentimental (*schwärmerisch*). He played to me in compliance with my request, and I now for the first time understand his music, and all the raptures of the lady world become intelligible. The *ad libitum* playing, which in the hands of other interpreters of his music degenerates into a constant uncertainty of rhythm, is with him an element of exquisite originality; the hard inartistic modulations, so like those of a dilettante—which I never can manage when playing Chopin's music—cease to shock me, for he glides over them almost imperceptibly with his elfish fingers."

It seems clear that the luxuries and refinements of a higher society than that to which he was born and bred, must have tended to enervate Chopin, and served at once to stimulate to morbid acuteness and to steep in relaxing languor those sensibilities which were from the first womanly, not manly, and which wanted more than anything healthful bracing; and such a constitution was sure to react on the work of the composer.

After finishing his education, Chopin repaired to Vienna, where his pianoforte playing, delicately graceful and fanciful, like the man, won the approbation of connoisseurs, but was hardly so acceptable to the public as that of Liszt, who had preceded him. Chopin's music at this time is said to have been of a bravura character, in order to

display his execution, and to have included a very popular fantasia on Mozart's air of "La ci darem."

Chopin's own opinion was that he was not fit for concert-giving: the public intimidated him, and their breath stifled him. The political troubles in Poland caused Chopin, though warmly attached to his country, to quit it finally in 1831, when he was twenty-one years of age. He thought of coming to England, but was induced instead to go to Paris, where he was welcomed by the first musicians, and at once received into the intellectual *élite* of Parisian society, which followed and fêted him, while women who, like himself, were the rage for beauty, or genius, or social prestige, competed for instruction from him in the lessons which, under the circumstances, he did not refuse to give. Here again was a woeful atmosphere with regard to any hope of counteracting the effeminacy and morbid mixture of melancholy and passion which existed in Chopin.

Mr. Haweis affords us a picture of Chopin in his lodging in the Chaussée d'Antin, of an evening, where the retirement which he professed to seek was apt to be invaded by his enthusiastic admirers. His biographer places Chopin's slight elegant figure at the piano, in the room clearly lit by wax candles, and proceeds to group picturesquely round him Heine, the poet, whose history is still more miserable than the composer's was to prove; Meyerbeer, the leader of the Franco-German musicians; Delacroix, the painter; and "buried in a fauteuil, with her arms resting on a table," George Sand (Madame Dudevant). The last was indeed the evil genius of Chopin's life. Her great genius linked to that terrible, godless, Christless selfishness, which owns no law but its own

requirements and inclinations, attracted and held the egotistical dreaming composer, as a shining light attracts a moth, and as strength fascinates weakness, while to Madame Dudevant the desperate allegiance of Chopin was a fresh tribute and a last sensation. She detached or withheld him from other and it might have been truer friends; she engrossed him with and for herself, keeping him back (though it must be said that he had from the first not so many of the elements of progress as those of deterioration in his nature) from what might have been a higher career; she confirmed in his music, instead of the trumpet-call to virtue, honour, and immortality, the syren strain of morbid, subtle murmurs and protests against Providence and man.

Six years after Chopin came to France, consumption, which had lain latent in his constitution from his childhood, declared itself. Madame Dudevant, acting the part of his friend, accompanied him to Majorca, and occupied with him the Villa Floriani, where the grounds "were bounded only by the sands of the sea-shore," and "here and there the foliage dipped into the water." In the sunshiny freshness of this southern island and country home, and under the care of his nurse, which was sedulous while it lasted, Chopin's health rallied; but on his return to Paris, when Madame Dudevant rejected, with inflexibility and scorn, his wild idea of becoming her husband, and saying with cruel calmness and consistency that he and she had better part, broke off all communication with him, the deceptive gleam of restored strength and lengthened days began from that moment to fade. He declared that all the cords which bound him to life were broken, that there was nothing to live for now—no second friend;

and yet he was no more than seven-and-twenty years of age, with a great and beautiful world around him. He had kind friends and kindred, among them his sister; he had his art, which had been so much to other composers, and the work which he could do with it in the world; and he had the great Giver and Recompenser of that work to whom he should render account.

After having been nursed through a fresh attack of illness by his favourite pupil, M. Gutman, Chopin came out of the crisis so cadaverous in complexion that his friends could hardly recognise him, and plaintively restless and reckless in manner, like a sick child who has been crossed and will indemnify itself by the utmost waywardness, whatever may be the consequence—a manner which would really have been ludicrous affectation had it not been for the mournful sequel. He would not remain in France, he "had passed through Paris," and the enigmatical grandiose phrase seemed to catch his fancy. Paris could never be anything to him again; he had best leave it and go anywhere—to England (a conclusion which was not particularly flattering to the country which has been so cordial a patroness of foreign art in music). A more practical reason for Chopin's coming to England at this time than the mere satiety of weariness, to which he attributed it, may be found in the political changes of 1848, the year in which he came to England: he was then in his thirty-ninth year.

In London, where Chopin's fame had preceded him, he was met with open arms in the most exclusive circles. "He was presented to the queen by the Duchess of Sutherland," and played at many private concerts, besides playing twice publicly at Willis's Rooms. He was to have

come to England originally, Chopin told his friends, but he had "to pass through Paris first," and the significant phrase had the same charm for some of his friends that it had for himself. Chopin entered into the full rush and whirl of the end of the season, without regard to his state of health, then went down to Scotland with the rest of the world, against the positive prohibition of his physicians. The exhausting influences and the colder climate to which he had exposed himself, caused his disease to advance with rapid strides. He came back to London, and was tempted to play at the ball given in aid of his banished Polish countrymen—his last public appearance —and then hurried over to his adopted country, France, with the end close in view.

In the utmost prostration and depression he lay in bed and rarely spoke, watched faithfully and affectionately by his pupil Gutman, his sister Louise, and the Countess Delphine Polocka, one of the beautiful and distinguished women who had gathered round him and been so won by him in his short prime. "One evening," to follow Mr. Haweis's slightly grandiloquent yet touching narrative, "Chopin, who had lain insensible for many hours, suddenly rallied. He observed the countess, draped in white, standing at the foot of the bed; she was weeping bitterly. 'Sing,' murmured the dying man: she had a lovely voice. It was a strange request, but so earnest a one, that his friends wheeled the piano from the adjoining parlour to his bedroom door, and there, as the twilight deepened with the last rays of the setting sun streaming into the room, the countess sang that famous canticle to the Virgin, which it is said once saved the life of Stradella. 'How beautiful it is!' he exclaimed; 'my God, how beau-

tiful! Again, again!' In another moment he swooned away." "Chopin was said to have asked, shortly before his death, that his attendants should sing and play for him a Polish national air and Mozart's 'Requiem,'" quotes Moscheles.

Chopin died in 1849, at thirty-nine years of age. After his death, numbers of his friends who came to take a last look of the dead, remembering Chopin's love of flowers, brought such quantities that the bed and the very room in which he lay were strewn with them. "The pale face," Mr. Haweis ends, "seemed to have regained in death its early beauty; there was no more unrest, no signs of care; he lay sleeping tranquilly amongst the flowers."

I have already spoken of Chopin's womanish beauty of person. In character he was thoroughly a Pole, fervent, unsettled, and endowed with the picturesque, melancholy interest which belongs to the hero of so-called romance, but which will hardly stand the demands of the simpler, grander, more sober and steadfast, and far more heroic romance of the every-day life of faith and duty to one's God and one's neighbour in the homeliest life in which man's lot can be cast.

Chopin's gifts and attainments, both as a composer and executant, were an exact reflex of his character and history, and even of the hectic beauty which his constitution lent to his person. He was by no means thoroughly trained as a musician, and some of the exquisite effects which he produced, like some of the effects in photography, are said to have been occasioned by errors and trespasses against law and rules. His limits were narrow, for his most enthusiastic admirers admit that even in the concerto he failed, and became incoherent, and that he ought to

have been confined to the piano. With regard to the piano, it has been said that Chopin has done for the instrument what Schubert has done for song; and if mere popularity is referred to, the statement may pass, for Chopin's wistful, delicate, tender, and passionately pathetic pieces seem to come exactly within the range of the multitude of fairly refined pianoforte-players who cannot reach up to the height of Beethoven; not only so, but there is a special fascination in such morbidly tender music, as there is in morbid sentiment of every description, and which appears to make Chopin more generally acceptable in England than the far freer and wider Schubert—whom, by-the-bye, Chopin did not greatly appreciate, accusing, in his own soft refinement of mind and manners, the somewhat clownish man, who lived the most of his life in the homely shade, of boisterousness and vulgarity in the expression of some of his work. But, apart from popularity, the statement that Chopin is the great composer for the piano must be taken with considerable reservation. Not to speak of the great master, Beethoven, who did much for the piano, Clementi served it worthily, Mendelssohn did not overlook it, and both Schubert and Schumann gave it of their best, while Moschelles was the most classic composer for the piano in his day. Chopin's best, however charming, was deficient in soundness and in the essential quality of healthfulness. "On the whole," writes Moschelles of Chopin's works, "I find his music often too sweet, not manly enough, and hardly the work of a profound musician." "His (Chopin's) best ideas are but isolated; he leaves them fragmentary, and fails to produce a work of complete unity."

Chopin's great excellence lay in his beautiful individual

ideas, his surpassing harmonic combinations, the gracefulness of his phraseology, the novelty which he introduced into his music by his "unreserved application of exceptional forms and passing notes."* His playing was characterized by the same fine finish which was displayed in his composition, and "was rendered very peculiar by his free use of the *tempo rubato*."—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary*.) Mr. Haweis, in his encomiums on Chopin, mentions that "it is to him we owe the extension of chords struck together in arpeggio, the little groups of superadded notes 'falling like light drops of pearly dew upon the melodic figure.'" Chopin left behind him, besides a few concertos and sonatas, eighteen "nocturnes," a mass of lighter piano music, including eleven books of mazurkas. His most characteristic music is to be found in his mazurkas, polonaises, "scherzos," and studies.

Of some minor composers and musicians well known within their range, such as De Bériot, the great violinist, and the second husband of the famous and very popular singer Madame Malibran, who was carried out fainting after complying with the encore of her "inimitable shake on the high C" at the Manchester Festival, 1836, and died suddenly and prematurely a few days afterwards; Paganini, the violinist;† Böhme, the improver of, and composer for

* To a friend who ventured to suggest that he did not dwell enough on some melodious *motif*, he sadly replied, "I am always thinking of my country, and then I vent my indignation at her wrongs in those runs and scales over the piano which you think are in excess."

† The strange rumours which had heralded Paganini's arrival in London were, that "he had murdered his wife, and during the years of imprisonment had taught himself on the single G string which remained to his violin the *tours de force* which were the wonder of the world. His avarice was reported fabulous. His appearance reminded one of an apparition—olive-tinted complexi n, sharply defined

the flute; Charles Czerny, the great music-teacher, and writer of hundreds on hundreds of pieces for the piano, distinguished by Fétis as "brilliant and agreeable;" the Kalkbrenners, father and son; Thalberg, the great pianist; Herz, another pianist, whose pianoforte pieces had great but fleeting popularity; Strauss, the popular composer of dance music, whose walzes and galops were appreciated where greater music did not find an entrance; Jullien, of whom Moscheles wrote, "His dance tunes, strongly spiced with drum, bassoon, and trumpet, are attractive to all, but specially to the schoolboy, who would not think it Christmas if he did not go to Jullien's concerts,"—I have not space to do more than mention the names.

Ignace Moscheles was born at Prague, in 1794. His father was a worthy cloth-merchant of Jewish descent and persuasion in the town, and who still found leisure in the middle of his business cares "to keep up his music which he loved devotedly," and who was resolved that one of his children should "become a thorough-bred musician." It was the time of the French Revolution, when a military frenzy possessed the population, old and young. Moscheles, as a little boy, was accustomed to run with other boys to hold the music of the military band performing in front of

features, the glowing, deeply sunken eyes, the scanty but long black hair, the thin, gaunt figure, upon which the clothes hung loosely, and the long, bony fingers. On his first appearance at the opera-box, the crowded house was wild; everything had to be played twice over; every lady was leaning forward out of her box to wave her handkerchief; people in the pit were standing on the benches shouting 'Hurrah! bravo!' His venturesome flights, above all his soft, melting flageolet tones, and even power of expression, became, in the end, monotonous and characterized by poverty of invention. His 'Sonata Militaire' had a southern glow, but was unable to dispense with the drum."—*Moscheles.*

the guard-house, and on his return from such service would cry, "I, too, will be a musician." At seven years of age, he was taken by his father to play to Dionys Weber, director of the Conservatoire of Music at Prague. Little Moscheles's mother had dressed him in his Sunday's best, and without doubt or fear he attempted to give on the piano his favourite piece, which was far beyond his comprehension—Beethoven's "Sonate Pathétique." He was heard, to his surprise, without any interruption of wonder or praise, and, at the end, his judge delivered the plain sentence, "Candidly speaking, the boy is on the wrong road, for he makes a hash of great works which he does not understand, and to which he is utterly unequal. But he has talent, and I could make something of him, if you will hand him over to me for three years, and follow out my plan to the letter. The first year he must play nothing but Mozart; the second, Clementi; and the third, Bach; but only that—not a note as yet of Beethoven; and if he persists in using the circulating libraries, I have done with him for ever." The terms were complied with.

Moscheles, at the age of fourteen, in 1808, lost his father, whose earnest wish, that of living to hear his son's first composition, was not fulfilled. With difficulty, and against the cautious advice of some of the most potent family relations, Moscheles's widowed mother sent her son to finish his musical studies and earn his own bread in Vienna. So high and universal was the standard of music in Vienna, that Moscheles learnt something from the musical parties in the city which he was privileged to attend, and where the delicacy of touch and expression on the part of many of the ladies who played, surpassed his own. In company Moscheles met his old hero, Beethoven,

and to the young man's amazement heard the Viennese ladies not only play before the mighty master, but play his own compositions evidently to his satisfaction. For the severe study of theory, Moscheles placed himself under Dom-Kapell-Meister Albrechtsberger; and for operatic teaching Moscheles took for his master Salieri, acting as his deputy kapell-meister at the Opera, for three years, and receiving as such a free pass to all the theatres.

When just turned of twenty, Moscheles earned, at artistic réunions and at public performances, his first laurels alike as an executant and composer, in addition to making for himself an honest, honourable livelihood by his numerous pupils. About this time he composed his "Sonate Mélancolique," which occurred to him when he was giving a lesson, and which he was accustomed to regard as one of the best of his works.

Moscheles shared in all the stir and joy of the liberation of Germany, and the gaiety of the congress at Vienna; attending court balls and fireworks, and, above all, operas and oratorios, with indefatigable zeal. For a concert to be given on an Ash Wednesday, for the charitable institutions of Vienna, Moscheles wrote, at the suggestion of the Countess Hardigg, his famous "Alexander Variations," being variations on the march of the regiment which bore the name of the Russian Emperor Alexander. Of this piece, the execution of which won for Moscheles his fame as a bravura-player, it was long said that the composer alone could play it; and it remained popular after Moscheles would fain have locked it, with other "youthful efforts," "away in some dark corner."

On Moscheles' first return to his native town, Prague, in 1816, he gave a concert for the poor, which was largely

attended. On visiting Pesth, he was invited by the noble family of Batthyany, and by other Hungarian magnates, to their country seats; and he never wearied praising the artistic taste which he saw, and the hospitality he received. Yet how unspoilt the young man was, either there or among his admiring public and many friends in Vienna, is proved by the simple entry in his diary on his next return home, "How delightful it is once more to be with mother and sisters!—what pleasures it gives me to play before them!—no one listens as they do;" and again, "To-day my sisters and I had some of our old childish fun—a regular game of romps: I think mother liked it."—(*Moscheles' Life.*)

In 1816, Moscheles, at twenty-two years of age, started on his first great musical tour, "franked" by many and powerful letters of recommendation to different German courts. While travelling in a "handerer," a species of waggon, he had with him "a dumb row of keys," in order to keep his fingers exercised. This tour included Leipsic, Dresden, Munich, Augsburg, Amsterdam (where he first saw the sea), Brussels, and Paris, where the "haute finance" vied with each other in entertaining him, and where, on the day of the christening of the Duc de Bordeaux, he saw the Duchesse de Berri standing on a balcony at the Tuileries, and showing her infant to the enthusiastic crowd.

From Moscheles' success in Paris, his biographer writes with quiet pride, dates "the constant beneficent support which he thenceforth rendered, with the greatest satisfaction, to his mother, sisters, and an invalid brother, all of whom had been left, on the premature death of the head of the house, unprovided for."

From Paris Moscheles travelled by Calais to Dover

under the guise of a courier, his music being stamped, at the Austrian Embassy, "despatches;" but he rather disgraced his couriership, and betrayed the deception by his rampant sea-sickness. His first lodgings in London were at the Golden Cross Hotel, Charing Cross; when little did he think, he moralises later, that "this strange London" was to become his "second home." Moscheles played at the Philharmonic Society's Concerts, giving, among other pieces, his "Alexander Variations," named in England, the "Fall of Paris." He saw the procession and banquet in Westminster Hall at the coronation of George the IV. Much as he appreciated London art life, he records in his diary his gratitude to get away from "the heavy air which so often gives me headache."

Yet Moscheles, after repairing to Paris, returned again and again to London at the end of the Paris seasons. He himself tells a comical anecdote of his mistakes in English conversation, though he had studied the language long before he came to the country. He had heard the old-fashioned expression of contempt, "I do not care a fig;" and having in consequence confused the words fig and sneer, electrified a dinner-party, at which he was asked what fruit he should have for dessert, by requesting ".a few sneers."

Moscheles' English pupils were of the first rank and fashion, but were in other respects sometimes eccentric enough; there is a sketch of one—a spinster of sixty summers. "Her high head-dress . . . . enough to convulse one with laughter. . . . She does not intend to learn anything, for how often, during the forty-five or fifty minutes which I devote to her, do I urge her on to play, and can scarcely get her to do it. The good lady is talkative, but at the same time hospitable. I am obliged to lunch with

her each time; and whilst I eat, she talks, until at last I compel her to hazard her gouty little fingers on a piece of modern music. When, however, we have not worked actively together, my conscience does not allow me to pocket the guinea which she hands me every time, neatly wrapped up in paper."

At the end of the London season of 1823, Moscheles, in his thirtieth year, revisited Germany and Austria, renewing all his old relations, receiving fresh ovations, signing the marriage contract of his sister Fanny and giving her a dower, and undergoing a less pleasant experience in a severe illness which prostrated him for months. On his tours, apart from their honours and profits, Moscheles' benevolent, friendly spirit led him to give many a concert in aid of the poor or the unfortunate struck down by sudden calamity.

When visiting Berlin in 1824, Moscheles made the acquaintance, which was to ripen into so fast a friendship, of Mendelssohn, then a lad of fifteen. At the elder Mendelssohn's request, Moscheles, with some reluctance from his own modesty, gave lessons to Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn at Hamburg, in 1825.

Moscheles, in playing in the Apollo Saal at Hamburg, had, as one of his audience, Charlotte Embden. Herself a pianiste of merit, she was enchanted with the performance; an acquaintance and friendship with the performer naturally followed, and, after a short engagement, the couple were married in the same year, when Moscheles was about thirty-one years of age, "My Ehrentag," records the bridegroom in his diary, "with the fullest sense of happiness, with purity of heart and intention, and full of gratitude to the Almighty, I entered this holy state, and pray God to bless me;" and

God did bless him in a most happy marriage. Referring at another page of his diary to the fact of a worthy old uncle's warm opposition to Moscheles' adoption of the career of a musician, stigmatizing it as likely to be that of a "beer-fiddler," and including in his jeremiad the reproach that if Ignace Moscheles had taken to business, he might have had the good fortune to find his way to the wealthy city of Hamburg, and who could say that he might not have married the daughter of some rich merchant, the said Ignace Moscheles remarks pleasantly, that while he neither became a beer-fiddler nor entered a merchant's office, after all he went to Hamburg, and married a Hamburg lady.

The year of their marriage, Moscheles and his wife came to London, where his pupils gathered round him; he played at the Philharmonic Society's concerts, had a concert of his own, and worked at his studies. He would jot down the subjects on any scrap of paper in his daily teaching rounds, and work them out in the evenings; his wife trying over particular passages, and practising them the next day, during his absence from home. In his holidays, Moscheles both gave his wife music-lessons and taught her how to copy music. The Moscheles spent their Sundays with the Clementis, at their place, Elstree, near London. William Collard, Clementi's partner in the business of pianoforte-making, became the most intimate friend and counsellor of the Moscheles. Among the most valued of their household gods, was a splendid piano presented to them by Clementi, and on it was inscribed with his own hand, in front of the key-board, the dedication, "Muzio Clementi e socj all' ingegnosissimo, I. Moscheles, ed alla sua amabilissima consorte." Somewhat later, Moscheles received the

gift of a fine piano from the Messrs. Erard, but he long preferred his "Clementi."

For one of his slighter fantasias, written at this time, Moscheles notes the price received from Collard as twenty-five guineas. Afterwards he raised the price of his lighter pieces to thirty guineas each, saying that, with what they fetched, he could help many a poor musician in Germany, who wrote well and was ill paid. Nine lessons a day were Moscheles' stereotyped number.

Here is Moscheles' treatment of Christmas waits:—"At Christmas time a band of wind instruments (the waits) plays here generally late in the evening, and they mustered in force at my door. I knew this custom of old; and as I remembered all the tortures I had endured from their falsely harmonized carols, I ordered the servant to tell them they would certainly get no Christmas box from me, unless they promised never to return again. Trombone, much wounded, sent back to say, "Tell your master, if he does not like music he will not go to heaven." Moscheles kept Christmas-eve, in his later years in England, in his own German fashion, with a Christmas tree for his children.

In 1827, there is this mention of his playing at the Duchess of Kent's, in Kensington Palace:—"The little Princess Victoria was present, and the duchess begged me to play at once, so that the princess, who was obliged to go to bed early, might hear me. She left the room after my second piece. I had to play a great deal (on a Broadwood), and accompanied the duchess in a song of Beethoven, besides a duet from Zelmira, sung by her royal highness and the Princess Feodora. The royal party took a very friendly interest in my performances."

Heine, the poet, an old friend of Mrs. Moscheles' family, naturally resorted to the composer's house on Heine's first visit to London, when Mrs. Moscheles made a curious compact with the mocking genius. She could get him tickets to numbers of private galleries and other sights, and would consider it an honour to do so; but she must stipulate one thing in return, that Moscheles' name should not be mentioned in the book which Heine was about to write on England. Moscheles' speciality was music—the courageous candid woman told her astonished and probably affronted listener, but though it interested Heine, he did not thoroughly understand it; on the other hand, he could easily find in Moscheles a subject for his satirical remarks, and she would not like that. "He laughed, or rather simpered, in his peculiar way," Mrs. Moscheles ends, while herself telling the story; "and then we shook hands over our bargain."

In the winter of 1828 Moscheles and his family visited Scotland, where, after securing an audience with some difficulty, his fantasia, "Anticipations of Scotland," was received with great applause. He carried letters of recommendation to Sir Walter Scott, who received him very kindly, and with whom the Moscheles breakfasted in Shandwick Place. "He opened the door himself," writes Moscheles, delighted with his host's simplicity. "How do you like my cousin, the piper?" asked Sir Walter: "you know, we Scotch are all cousins." Even Moscheles' amiability could not lead to an answer in the affirmative; but the host expatiated on the wonderful effect the national music had on the native Highlanders, arguing that a wandering piper would attract crowds in the streets of Edinburgh; also that, in battle, the sound of bagpipes would inspire Scotch

soldiers with a desperate valour. "You should hear my cousin, the piper, play and sing the 'Pibroch of Donald Dhu,'" but with Gaelic words, said he: "those words are the only appropriate ones to convey spirit and animation, but the melody itself carries one away." "He began to hum the tune, and beat time on the carpet with his stick, which was always by his side; but, added he, 'The whole thing is wrong; I sing so badly. My cousin, who has just come in, must play the tune for us up-stairs in the drawing-room.' Accordingly we went up-stairs; the cousin played me the subject; I extemporised upon it, and completely won the heart of our ever youthful-minded and genial host.* This was the prelude to my playing several Scotch airs, which I had to vary and interweave in all manner of ways. . . . . He (Sir Walter) treated my wife like a pet daughter, kissed her on the cheek when she went away, and promised he would come and see the children and bring them a book. This he did, and his gift was the 'Tales of a Grandfather.' He had written on the title-page, "To Adolphus and Emily Moscheles, from the grandfather.'"

Though Sir Walter was suffering from gout during the Moscheles' stay in Edinburgh, and though the "sense of music" of the great author was, as the composer had already discovered, "very limited," Sir Walter exerted himself to be present at Moscheles' morning concert, where he sought out Mrs. Moscheles in her remote corner and sat by her side, his "hearty bravos and cheers" stimulating the audience to redouble their applause. Between the parts of the concert, Sir Walter asked Mrs. Moscheles if

* Moscheles afterwards made "Donald Dhu" the foundation of his piece, "The Strains of Scotch Bards," which he dedicated to Sir Walter Scott.

she knew Bürger's poem of "Der Dichter liebt den guten Wein," told her how he delighted in the poem, and had translated it into English, adding, "Would you like to have it? I shall send it to you." "She begged him to recite the song in the original; this, to my wife's great delight, he willingly assented to, whilst all around listened eagerly. Next day the English version was sent with a cordial parting note."

Before the Moscheles left Edinburgh, they had an opportunity of seeing Sir Walter sitting in the court of justice with a wilderness of official papers before him. About the time of their marriage, Mrs. Moscheles had given to her husband an album, which he preserved for forty-five years, and bequeathed to his son. It contained souvenirs of many musical and literary celebrities. On this occasion Sir Walter Scott was added to the number, as he translated and inscribed in its pages a short German poem.

Sir Walter, always pleased to lend a helping hand to his fellows, got from Moscheles a promise to find a publisher for "some pretty songs set to music by a Miss Brown, with words by her sister, Felicia Hemans," and engaged to return Moscheles' visit in London—punctually fulfilling his engagement.

Among the lions of Edinburgh, which Moscheles seems to have viewed with peculiar interest, was the scene of the tragic death of Queen Mary's musician, Rizzio.

Moscheles remarks on the musical portion of the Scotch Church service as "peculiar." "The Psalms," he adds, "are intoned by a four-part choir, in which the congregation joins. But the basses are usually in unison with the sopranos, instead of forming the support of the other voices."

He gave lessons while in Edinburgh, "in spite of the almost prohibitory fee of two guineas an hour." "Some ladies," he says, "are bent on galloping through my compositions with me at their side, no matter how difficult the music is, or how short the time."

On Moscheles' return to his busy professional life in London, in addition to his teaching and composition, "he had to keep up his social position," "to give and attend parties, to keep late hours incessantly, and play at his own and other concerts; always remembering that his reputation, perhaps his livelihood, depended on his playing up to a standard very difficult to maintain when the artist is jaded and worn." His only security for health of body and mind lay then in his happy home, and his taking entire rest and recreation during the autumn months, in place of engaging in continental tours and provincial festivals. A great pleasure to the Moscheles at this time, was their friendship with the famous singer, and lovely and amiable woman, Sontag, whose appearance in London was so enthusiastically hailed, that "the pressure in the pit of the Opera House was so great, that gentlemen, by the time they had found their seats, were minus their coat tails, and ladies lost their head-dresses." But a far greater enjoyment was the first of the visits to England of Felix Mendelssohn.

In 1830 Moscheles and his family went to the house, No. 3, Chester Place, Regent's Park, which they occupied for the remaining sixteen years of his stay in England.

Of the musical education of children Moscheles wrote, "They must play before company; one can't get them too early over the dilettante shyness which borders so closely on affectation. One must teach them not to think of their

own pretty selves, but of the greatness of the work of art they are to interpret. . . . You ask me if your daughters ought to learn thorough bass? I say yes: of course no practical application can be made of the study, unless it be pursued for a number of years; yet even when followed in a dilettante way, it helps to the better understanding of good compositions and the rules of their structure, being the grammar of the art of sound; it is an indispensable aid to the deeper comprehension of music. The reading of a figured bass is necessary as a step to the reading of scores. . . . . Let me advise you to bestow particular attention to the working of the fourth and fifth fingers, which are naturally the weakest, and ought to acquire the firmness of the others. . . . . The pupil must from the first be made to hold the arms and hands in a natural manner, neither raising the elbows or wrists too high, nor allowing them to drop too low. . . . Time and expression should be cultivated also; a little later, however. Variations and fantasias upon operatic airs are less fitted for the cultivation of individuality of style, because in such music the ear depends too much on well-known forms: original works by good masters are more useful." Of his English pupils Moscheles laments on one occasion, "They shrink from all serious study. Occasionally a mamma says, 'Will you give her something with a pretty tune in it, brilliant and not too difficult?' To meet this wish, I try to avoid full chords and uncommon modulations; but this makes me look upon such pieces as spurious bantlings, not as the genuine offspring of my muse." On another occasion he observes with regard to a pupil, "Ten stiff fingers are waiting in the next room for me to make them flexible; they are like thirsty mill-wheels waiting for a fresh flow of water."

Though in general treated with marked courtesy, Moscheles had occasionally to suffer the penalties of being a teacher to pupils whose circles needed to learn "manners as well as music." An instance is quoted in his biography of his giving lessons in a nobleman's house, where "even the servants were disrespectful;" and the treatment he experienced was only to be met by the independent airs he was forced to assume, in order to assert his rights as a gentleman. Not offered a chair, he sat down in the presence of the lady, and "insisted on walking up the principal staircase, although he was shown up the back one." After waiting in vain for nearly nine months for thirty-five pounds due to him, a steward called at the Moscheles' house, and produced the accounts on which the noble debtor had written, "Pay the man fifteen pounds on account." Mrs. Moscheles remonstrated, and the steward answered in a sympathizing tone, "Well, ma'am, I advise you to take it when you can get it." A little later, the lady sent to beg that Moscheles would resume his lessons in the family; he refused. An explanation was politely requested by the nobleman himself; and when given by Moscheles, he was overwhelmed with civility, and engaged to give four lessons a week in the family.

In the winter of 1832, Moscheles writes that, true to his habit of composing something new on his wife's birthday, he began a septett on the 30th of November, but was interrupted in working at his composition by a command to play before the Court at Brighton. Here is the account of the royal reception, which somewhat chilled Moscheles, accustomed to the musical enthusiasm of foreign courts:—

"We met in the evening in the fantastically decorated and beautifully lighted music-room attached to the Pavilion.

The scene was a brilliant one. King William IV., Queen Adelaide, and their suite sat at the farthest corner of the room. The guests were a long way from the piano, and I was not presented. I played my new 'Fantasia upon English National Songs,' which was dedicated to the queen. During my performance the king alone approached me, and seemed to be listening; he bowed condescendingly when I rose, but did not say a syllable: the company talked loudly. Sir Andrew (Barnard) asked me to play on the organ, and later in the evening I had to accompany eight imperfectly trained performers in some selections from Haydn's *Creation*. Only the Princess Augusta and the Marchioness of Cornwallis took any interest in my 'Alexander Variations' and extempore playing, and that in spite of the general buzz of conversation. Some numbers of *Robert le Diable* were given by the band, and the performance finished with 'God save the King.' The Court withdrew after Sir Andrew had handed to the queen a copy of my 'English Fantasia'—an honour I had myself solicited and been refused. Sir Andrew dismissed me as before, with a few polite courtly phrases about the satisfaction felt by their majesties; but none of the company exchanged a word with me."

When in company, Moscheles was exposed to much amateur music, and used to play himself in self-defence; when in sea-side lodgings, he was sometimes driven to change his quarters by the pertinacious strumming of his fellow-lodgers.

In 1838 Moscheles saw the coronation of Queen Victoria. "Sir George Smart put Moscheles into a surplice, and placed him as a bass singer in Westminster Abbey, that he might witness the splendid ceremony; for tickets

were not to be had for love or money." What impressed the composer most in the imposing spectacle was Handel's chorus, "Zadock the Priest" and his "Hallelujah," which "moved one almost to tears," although he adds, "it was a deeply interesting moment when the venerable Archbishop of York placed the crown upon that virgin brow." Mrs. Moscheles, who saw the procession from a house in Piccadilly, records her impression that "the gold state coach, drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, is a splendid specimen of mediæval furniture; that the young girl of eighteen, England's queen, looked very pretty, and that the Mistress of the Robes, the Duchess of Sutherland, who sat opposite her, is a really noble and majestic beauty."

The Moscheles frequently met the late Emperor of the French, while Prince Napoleon, an emigrant resident in London. "He talked in a very friendly way to Moscheles," writes Mrs. Moscheles, "of years gone by, when his mother, the Queen Hortense, took such delight in his playing, adding that he could never forget the impression he had received as a boy. He was very polite and agreeable to me, but I was not struck particularly with anything he said. Generally, on such occasions as these, he remains in some quiet corner of the room, as though he preferred looking on to talking."

About 1839, Moscheles began to cherish the idea of giving up playing in public before his powers should have suffered decay. At the same time his father-in-law suggested that the composer ought to double the price of his lessons, in order to diminish the number of his pupils. To this suggestion Moscheles made the wise and generous objection that he could not make up his mind to such a

step, for people might well accuse him of selfishness, and that too in a country to which he was "very mainly indebted" for the position which he then held.

In 1839, when Moscheles was in Paris with his family, he and Chopin were commanded to play before the French Court, at St. Cloud. "At nine o'clock Chopin and I," writes Moscheles, "were called for by P. and his charming wife. We all four went off in a pelting storm of rain, and felt more comfortable when we entered the warm and brilliantly lighted palace. We passed through some splendid apartments to a *salon carré*, where only the royal family were assembled—the queen (Amélie) at a round table, with an elegant work-basket before her (I wonder whether she was knitting a purse for me); next to her were Madame Adélaïde, the Duchess of Orleans, and the ladies of the court. They one and all treated us kindly, as if we were old acquaintances. The queen, as well as Madame Adélaïde, declared that they still remembered with gratitude the delight I gave them at the Tuileries. The king (Louis Philippe) came up to me to say the same thing, adding, he supposed an interval of between fifteen and sixteen years had elapsed since that time. I said he was quite correct, but thought all the while of the poor Count d'Artois, who had then been present. The queen then asked if the instrument—a Pleyel—was placed as we liked it; was the lighting what we wanted; if the chairs were the right height, &c.; and was as anxious for our comfort as a citizen-queen might well be. First of all, Chopin played a 'Mélange of Nocturnes and Études,' and was extolled and admired as an old court-favourite. I followed with some old and new 'studies,' and was honoured with similar applause. We

then sat down together at the instrument, he again playing the bass—a thing which he always insists on. The small audience now listened intently to my 'E flat major Sonata,' which was interrupted by such exclamations as *Divin! délicieux!* After the andante the queen whispered to one of her suite, 'Ne serait-il pas indiscret de le leur redemander?' which was tantamount to a command; so we played it again with increased *abandon*, and in the finale gave ourselves up to a musical delirium. . . . . Chopin played another solo as charmingly as before, and met with the same reception. I then improvised on some of Mozart's sweetest airs, and finally dashed away at the 'Zauberflöte Overture.' Better than all the words of praise, which flow so glibly from the lips of princes, was the king's close attention during the entire evening. Chopin and I revelled like brothers in the triumph achieved by the individual talent of each. . . . . At last, after being allowed to enjoy some refreshments, we left the palace at half-past eleven, this time only under a shower of compliments, for the rain had ceased, and we had a clear night."* Subsequently Moscheles was asked privately whether the *Légion d'Honneur*, or any other mark of royal favour, would be valued as a reward for his playing at St. Cloud. He preferred "something else" to the order, and received a valuable dressing-case, on which were engraved the words, "Donné par le Roi Louis Philippe."

In 1840 Moscheles received the appointment of Pianist to Prince Albert. It was merely honorary, and held nothing of the old German relations between patron and Kammer-Musikus. Though few princely patrons could

* "Life of Moscheles."

have loved music better than Prince Albert loved it, and though he himself was a composer, Moscheles was never called upon to examine the Prince's compositions.

At a later period Moscheles re-visited Vienna. In playing before the Austrian court, the imperial and artistic tastes and knowledge jarred considerably. Moscheles got for a theme something out of Donizetti's *Linda di Chamouni*, and had to confess his ignorance of that "most glorious of all operas," Moscheles comments ironically; and after Mozart had been substituted, and in addition "See the conquering Hero comes" had been included in the performance, the emperor tried the composer's courtly coolness and tact by supposing that the last march was from the Vestalin!

At Vienna it "rained concerts" at the rate of five a day. Moscheles played before the Court, and had the opportunity of seeing the splendid fête in honour of the installation of the young archdukes, "who looked charming in blue and white satin, as the knights of the Golden Fleece. The imperial family in their box, the Hungarian noble guard covered with jewels, the picturesque turbans and mantles of the knights of the order, supplied a spectacle fit for an artist."

His tour carried him to Prague, where he spent a quiet time with his brother and sisters, and in their company visited the grave of his parents—"a sweet if sad pilgrimage."

On his return to London, he received a royal command to play at a concert in Buckingham Palace.

In 1845 Moscheles attended the great musical festival that inaugurated Beethoven's monument at Bonn, and which included among its royal guests Queen Victoria,

the Prince Consort, and the King and Queen of Prussia, and among its musical guests most of the distinguished living composers in Germany.

In 1846 Moscheles accepted the appointment offered to him, through Mendelssohn, of Professor in the Conservatoire, Leipsic, at a salary of eight hundred thalers, or one hundred and twenty pounds a year. The sacrifice of income involved in leaving England was great; but living in Germany was simple and inexpensive, and to the husband and father in middle life—for Moscheles was now fifty-two years of age—it no doubt seemed that he had earned such a retirement to his native country, where, in the congenial company of his dearest friend, he should, untrammelled by the cares and worries and desperate weariness of a public and toilsome life, devote the rest of his days to training artists for the promotion of that art which both loved so well. But twenty-four years spent in England had formed for Moscheles and his family many ties there, which they did not break without keen regret: the very nursery where his children had played, and the study where he had worked so joyfully and conscientiously, had become dear to him.

Moscheles' "Four Matinées for Classical Pianoforte Music," and his farewell concert, as unyieldingly classical, were "brilliantly successful." His departure was still to be preceded by the marriage of his eldest daughter, and by the memorable performance, at the Birmingham Festival, of Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. In the course of the festival some of Moscheles's best pieces—his "Recollections of Ireland" and his "Hommage à Handel"—were given. At this time Moscheles's health broke down temporarily, under the strain imposed upon it; and Mendels-

sohn, who was so soon to sink under his own burden, had to come to the rescue of his friend. At Leipsic, the Moscheles were warmly welcomed, particularly by the Mendelssohns. Moscheles entered heartily into his new duties, and enjoyed such relaxations as long walks with the Mendelssohns, friendly suppers and musical evenings at the professors' houses, where, according to Mendelssohn, "for Moscheles they took care to make good music, for *he* was not everybody."

The Moscheles' house, at Leipsic, was on historical ground. It was built on the scene of one of the most famous and tragical episodes of the great battle. In the Elster, bounding their garden, Poniatowsky fell in his attempt to cross with the retreating French army. (The incident is pathetically commemorated in one of Béranger's songs.) And at Leipsic Moscheles could write, "I am beginning to realise my dream of emancipation from professional slavery. In the Conservatoire I am engaged sixteen hours a week; at home I have but eight private lessons to give: what is that after the daily steeple-chase in London?"

Moscheles had gone with his wife, on the birth of their first grandchild, to London, where they heard of the death of Fanny Mendelssohn (Madame Hensel) at Berlin, which seems really to have been her brother's death-blow; for, as has been already said, Moscheles, on going to settle at Leipsic, utters no warning note as to any change in Mendelssohn's health and spirits, which might forebode that the union of the two friends in the Conservatoire, from which so much was hoped for art, was to be of the briefest duration. Either the alteration which had taken place in Mendelssohn before the performance of *Elijah*

became exaggerated in his friends' minds by subsequent events, or else it did not strike his intimate friend Moscheles. While in England, Moscheles witnessed and shared in the enthusiasm which Jenny Lind's singing produced on a London public. He asked her, in a letter, to fix an hour for his calling at her house, and "simple and unceremonious" she came to him next day, "bringing her answer verbally."

Mendelssohn's sad premature death was so severe a blow to the Moscheles, that a continued residence in Leipsic became a painful effort to them; but Moscheles argued manfully, "He invited me to take part in an institution that was so dear to him; to have laboured there with him would have been a daily joy and satisfaction; to work on there without him is my duty, which I regard as a sacred trust committed by him to my keeping: I must now work for us both."

Moscheles took the deepest interest in the many tokens by which the Leipsigers showed their regard for the memory of Mendelssohn, in the placing of the medallion likeness of Mendelssohn over the orchestra in the Gewandhaus; in the performance of Mendelssohn's music on the first recurrence of his birthday, with his widow present to witness the honour paid to her husband, and Moscheles' two daughters singing in the choir; and in the commemoration festival at the Conservatoire, where all went in mourning. Moscheles, by invitation, formed one of the executors appointed to deal with Mendelssohn's unpublished music, and during the few years that she survived her husband the relation between the Moscheles and Madame Mendelssohn continued of the most affectionate description.

Moscheles had still many happy years of a serene decline of life before him. In the year of the revolution (1848), when the Austrian capital shared in the general tumult and bloodshed, Moscheles sorrowed patriotically for his "light-hearted musical Vienna;" and when the disturbances threatened Leipsic, he had himself enrolled in the National Guard: but the storm passed by without breaking near at hand, and the solitary reminiscence of soldiering which remained to Moscheles was an exceptionally irregular and agreeable one—that of standing sentry one night on the ramparts, and of taking the liberty of fraternising with another musical soldier-civilian on the congenial topic of *Don Giovanni*, which caused Moscheles to report that he had spent the night of duty very comfortably.

As a teacher in the Conservatoire, Moscheles was not only zealous and painstaking, but was distinguished by the geniality which caused him to meet his pupils out of class as an intelligent friend, in these simply social German evenings, when he would put aside Mozart and Beethoven to play dance music for the young men and their partners.

Moscheles had many pleasant holiday tours, for the terms of his engagement allowed him three months' absence during the year, at any season which he might select; and these holiday tours extended far and wide—not only to Prague to show his children the graves of his father and mother, to point out to them the place where he had stood as a little boy in the "ring" and helped to hold the music of the military bandsmen, and the house of Dyonis Weber, his old teacher, and to make his young people known to their kindred, but to Saxon Switzerland, Italy, and France, and, as his family became more and more scattered, back

to England to visit one married daughter, to Hungary to visit another, and to Belgium to be with his painter son among the old Flemish art-towns.

Moscheles not only lived to celebrate his silver wedding in Homburg, where he had married his wife, when he was awoke by the chorale, "Nun danket alle Gott" and Mendelssohn's "Wedding March;" but he came near to keeping his golden wedding with an ever-increasing gratitude to God for his faithful partner and her preservation to him, and for that rare and blessed experience of an old age in which the heart is still young. One of the most prized gifts received in these years was the repetition of the earlier gift from the Messrs. Erard, following on that of Clementi, in the shape of a second magnificent Erard piano, with all the modern improvements, to replace the old and worn-out instrument which had seen such good service in earlier days—a delight to the heart of a musician.

Among his latest compositions was a work of love undertaken during a quiet stay by the seaside with his children's children about his knees. He described it as a work for his grand-children—for his own grand-children in the first place, and his grand-children in art in the second. It was small pieces for four hands, called "Familienleben," and each intended to tell some incident of child-life or story dear to child-hearts. The names quoted by his biographer are, "The Little Prattlers," "Grandamma's Night Thoughts at the Spinning-wheel," "The Boy on his Rocking-horse."

Moscheles was able to join in the celebration of Mozart's centenary. He is described as entering into the festivities of his youngest child's marriage like the ideal man of

seventy, and about this time his portrait was taken by his son. Still later he exerted himself, though already stricken with his last weakness, to play in a family party in honour of the forty-fifth anniversary of his wedding-day. He retained his cheerfulness and his warm affections to the last: neither did his faith fail him, "and he died as he had lived, in peace and in the fear and love of God." *

Moscheles died in 1870, aged seventy-six years. His son's portrait of him represents the composer in an ordinary coat and necktie. He has a long, somewhat lined face, presenting a very sensible, kindly aspect. The forehead is of a moderate size, the nose well developed, and the eyes well opened. He has whiskers, cut in an old fashion; and does not wear either moustache or beard.

I do not need to say, after what has been quoted from Moscheles' Life, what an honest, industrious, thoroughly good man he was. As a composer he was "the most classic German composer for the piano of his day." He ranks among the small number of pianists who can be called great musicians. His field was the pianoforte; and he soon recognised the fact, and renounced the composition of music for other instruments in which he could only take a secondary place. In playing, no one else could so vary his style to suit the music of the different masters. His individual style underwent a distinct change, from the brilliant bravura-playing of his younger days, to the "grander" and more "masculine" performance of his maturer years. He improvised wonderfully, even causing groundless suspicions that the improvising could not be impromptu. M. Fétis records that he has seen Moscheles receive three themes, one of which he was to choose for

* "Life of Moscheles."

improvisation, when he treated in succession the whole three, then united them in an exquisite, marvellous work, making them pass alternately from one hand to the other, using the accompaniment in common.

Among Moscheles' best compositions, of different kinds, are his "G minor Concerto," "Twenty-four Studies," intended for masters, not pupils—the most popular being "The Nursery Tale," "Hommage à Handel," "Concerto Fantastique," "Sonate Caractéristique," "Sonate Mélancolique," the fantasia "Souvenirs, or Recollections of Ireland," and the fantasia on the air, "Au Clair de la Lune."

CHAPTER X.

Auber, 1784—1873. Halévy, 1799—1862. Meyerbeer, 1794—1864. Verdi, Gounod, Thomas, Flotow, 1811, &c. &c.

I MUST now include in one heterogeneous group the French, Franco-German, and Franco-Italian composers, whose chief theatre has still been the Parisian stage. Daniel François Esprit Auber was born at Caen, in 1784. His father was a wealthy printseller in Paris. We hear nothing in the case of young Auber of that early manifestation of musical genius to which attention has been called in the case of so many of the composers. His father destined him for a merchant, and only caused him to learn to play the piano as an accomplishment. Auber, in his young days, was sent as a clerk to London; and there we have the first mention of his musical taste and ability, although in the very modified form of his giving his early associates pleasure by playing and composing for them little romances. After Auber's speedy return to Paris, he still practised little musical compositions, but solely for his amusement. So little had he of any serious intention in the work that, having made some of his compositions for the benefit of a violoncellist who was his friend, it is said that Auber allowed his work to appear in the name of the not very scrupulous violoncellist. At last Auber began to

write, though still in a measure privately, in his own name, and to acquire a certain reputation among the musical amateurs of Paris, until, after writing two little operas, one of which was represented at the house of the Prince of Chimay, Cherubini's friend, Auber allowed himself to be so stimulated by the praise which he received, as to turn over in his mind the adoption of music for a career, and, as a preparatory step, wisely put himself under a strict course of study with Cherubini, during which he wrote a mass for four voices. In spite of all this deliberation and prudent precaution, Auber's first little opera, *Le Séjour Militaire*, brought out in 1813, when the composer was twenty-nine years of age, fell even "flatter" than the first operas of much more juvenile composers, who had rushed into the arena with hardly a thought except that of immediate and triumphant success as the result. In fact, so complete was the failure that Auber was tempted to renounce his ambition as altogether mistaken; and it was not till the death of his father, with the new and independent footing on which that event placed Auber, that he deliberately resolved, in spite of what had happened, to give up a merchant's life, and become, not an amateur, but a professional musician. Success did not come at once with the steadfastness which this determination implied. Auber's second opera, brought out in 1819, six years after the first, when he was thirty-five years of age, had no better fate than the first; neither did his third, fourth, fifth, nor sixth operas, "which he had still perseverance to write, and interest to bring out," meet with any decided success. It was not till his seventh opera of *La Neige*, represented in 1823, when he was thirty-nine years of age, that Auber gave any sure sign of vindi-

cating his choice and justifying the hopes of his musical friends. Yet even *La Neige*, which was given also out of France, was notoriously in Rossini's style. In the next two or three operas by Auber, notably in *Le Maçon*, he supplied evidence of growing departure from his model Rossini, and of the establishment of an individual style, which had such promise of success that already Auber received the cross of the Legion of Honour.

At last, in 1828, when Auber was forty-four years of age, he brought out, at L'Académie Royale, his *Muette de Portici*, known in England as *Masaniello*, which was hailed with loud acclamation, and which at once won Auber name and fame throughout musical Europe. As a mark of honour in his own country, Auber was elected, in the following year, a member of L'Institut. Of all the operas which Auber poured forth afterwards, at the rate of one a year throughout the greater part of a long life, only one other, and that a comic opera, came near in popularity to the *Muette* or *Masaniello*: the second opera was *Fra Diavolo*. But though Auber did not equal, far less surpass, his first great achievement, he proved such a steady and profitable attraction to the opera in France, that he was able to name his own terms, and require that each fresh work of his should be performed at least "forty times"* before it was laid aside. In addition to such certain profits, Auber succeeded Cherubini, in 1842, in the honourable post of Director of the Conservatoire.

Of Auber's work, which, even measured by the standard that he himself offered, was second rate, the best of his operas were *Gustave III.*, *Le Domino Noir*, and *Les Diamans de la Couronne*.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

The Italian version of *Fra Diavolo* was given at the Lyceum Theatre, London, in 1857. Auber continued to compose to the age of eighty-eight years. He died in 1873, aged eighty-nine years. Notwithstanding his late start in art, he was for nearly half a century a very popular composer. Yet his merits were by no means of the highest order; the greatest is said to have consisted in his "brilliant, sparkling, rich, and clear instrumentation." His next merit, and that which commanded the public, was his unquestionable dramatic power and passion, though they were neither grand nor deep, and his lavish abundance of strikingly pretty, sometimes tender, melodies. The "Market Chorus," in *Masaniello*, is an example of his animation and vigorous effect.*

A curious parallel has been drawn between Auber as a composer and Sir Walter Scott as a writer which seems really to have no foundation beyond the incidental facts that both were dramatic in their proclivities, and both were somewhat advanced in life before they began to establish their fame. The latter circumstance is not altogether exceptional in the histories of composers; we have already seen that both Gluck and Beethoven were mature men before they accomplished their best work, and we have to see that Meyerbeer shared their experience.

Jaques Fromental Halévy, born in Paris in 1799, a pupil of Cherubini, is best known by his opera of *La Juive*, brought out at the Académie in 1835, when Halévy was thirty-six years of age, and received with much favour in Germany. In Halévy's *La Juive*, the "Death March" is pronounced altogether "thrilling and appalling." Of his

* Moscheles says of Auber's *Bal Masqué*, "The music is often deafening, but often piquant; the ball wonderfully brilliant."

other numerous works, *Le Val d'Andorro* was given in London by a French company in 1850, and proved so far acceptable that it was adapted to the English stage. Halévy wrote his opera of *La Tempesta* for the Queen's Theatre, and came to London in 1850 to superintend its representation, but the work was not successful. He died in 1862, aged sixty-three years.*

Giacomo Meyerbeer, whom Fétis recognises as chief of a new school, was born in 1794, in Berlin. His family, originally named Beer, was rich, and honourably distinguished in science and art; one brother took rank among the first German astronomers, and another, who died young, had been hailed as a poet of much promise. At the age of four years Meyerbeer's musical intelligence began to display itself; catching up the tunes played on street organs, the little child was able to reproduce them with his right hand on the piano, and to accompany himself with his left hand. His father, struck by this proof of the child's musical ability, and being in circumstances to cultivate it thoroughly, caused young Meyerbeer's musical education to begin betimes, and to be conducted with the utmost care. His first teacher was a distinguished pupil of Clementi's, and so well did he discharge his office to a sympathetic pupil, that, at the age of six years, we are told, little Meyerbeer, like little Mozart, shone in the private concerts of Berlin. By the time he was nine years of age he was considered one of the best pianists in the city. The Abbé Vogler, then the first

* Charles Adolph Adam, born in Paris in 1804, a follower of Auber, is best known by his *Postillon de Lonjumeau*, brought out at the Opera Comique in 1833, when Adam was twenty-nine years of age, and by his one-act operas of *Le Brasseur de Preston* and *Le Châlet*. Adam died in 1856, at the age of fifty-two years.

musical theorist in Germany, listening to the originality of the child's improvising, predicted that he would be one day a great musician. On Clementi's visiting Berlin, he also took a lively interest in the child, and, although on the eve of relinquishing his vocation of teacher, gave the boy lessons during his stay in the city. Before young Meyerbeer was ten years of age, and before he had learnt composition, he had composed many little pieces for the piano. By the advice of friends, his father intrusted Meyerbeer to a pupil of Vogler's, for instruction in composition. To a certain extent the selection was good, for the teacher was a passionate admirer of Gluck, and a master of operatic composition; but for the higher branches of counterpoint Meyerbeer had to pass on to the care of Vogler himself, who had written to the ardent, aspiring lad, "There is for you a beautiful future in art. Come to me; repair to Darmstadt: I will receive you there as a son, and I will make you drink at the source of musical knowledge."

Meyerbeer's former teacher had sent a fugue of his pupil to Vogler, expecting him to praise it, when back came a thick packet, containing, first, the principles of such fugues; second, young Meyerbeer's fugue analyzed by such principles and found wanting; and third, a correct fugue on the same theme by Vogler himself, analyzed and explained. In place of being affronted or daunted by such honest dealing, the boy declared that it was as if scales fell from his eyes, immediately set himself to write a fugue in the new light given him, and sent it to Vogler, whose reply was the letter quoted.

Meyerbeer went to Vogler at the age of fifteen years, and remained two years in the school which he had

founded for composition, leading a severely artistic life in company with other musical students (among them Carl Maria Weber), who were getting oral lessons on counterpoint, composing church music on a given theme, and hearing their compositions analyzed; Meyerbeer's recreation being to accompany Vogler to the cathedral, where there were two organs, on which the master and his pupil improvised by turns on the subject of the given fugues, developing it. At the end of two years Vogler closed his school, and set out with his pupils to visit the principal towns of Germany.

Meyerbeer was then seventeen, and had already been appointed court composer at Darmstadt, from the grand duke's satisfaction with the young man's oratorio of *God and Nature* written—along with much church music not given to the world, in the school of Vogler. Meyerbeer's first independent composition, represented at Munich in 1812, when he was eighteen years of age, was *The Daughter of Jephthah*. M. Fétis characterizes it as more of an oratorio than an opera, and as "saturated" with scholastic forms: it had no success. Meyerbeer afterwards proceeded to Vienna. He relied on his powers as a pianist and improvisatore; but, on the very night of his arrival, he heard the playing of Hummel, then at the height of his fame in Vienna. According to M. Fétis, Hummel did not possess either the majestic character or the brilliance and novelty which had been remarked in Clementi's playing, which Meyerbeer had derived, to a certain extent, from him, and to which he gave fresh vigour. But Hummel's performance had a charm all its own, which Meyerbeer was catholic and candid enough in his taste at once to perceive. He dreaded odious comparisons, or to be beaten on the field which had seemed all his

own since infancy, while he desired to acquire a novel and distinct excellence. He gave another proof of the courage, constancy, and discretion which did not fail him throughout life, and perhaps also afforded an indication of his too ready tendency to submit himself to be swayed by the popular humour of the moment. Instead of trying to establish—on however good grounds—an opposition party to that of Hummel, by immediately displaying his own gifts and attainments, Meyerbeer shut himself up in Vienna for ten months, as if he had come to study, and not to exhibit; and it was only after the most sedulous practice in harmonizing the two styles, and in subjecting his fingering to the necessary modifications, that he consented to appear in public and confirm his reputation as a finished pianist. As a proof that there was no want of confidence in this course, Meyerbeer was so fully satisfied afterwards of his own great merits as a pianist, that he was possessed with the idea that he would become a model for others, and determined not to publish the music which he played, for several years, in order to prevent its becoming a common good for pianists. Eventually when his mind took a new bent, and his energy was turned in a fresh direction, he became indifferent to his reputation as a pianist, until he left off playing in public and even for himself, and finished by forgetting the greater part of his instrumental music which he had not written down, and which was thus lost to art (*Fétis*). In Vienna, when it was brilliant with the congress of united sovereigns, Meyerbeer was intimate with Moscheles—a friendship which lasted from youth to age. During the young composers' early association, when they would sit for hours together extemporising and improvising on one piano,

they produced, among other lively duets, that of the "Invitation to a Bowl of Punch."

Meyerbeer's eminence as a pianist caused him to receive, at the age of nineteen years, a commission to write for the Court Theatre, Vienna. He produced in 1813 *Alemeleck*, or the *Two Caliphs*. But he still wrote in a purely scholarly style, particularly antipathetic to those Viennese circles which had delivered themselves up to the natural spell of Italian music; and, as in his first oratorios, Meyerbeer failed. He was told by a friendly and competent critic that he had not studied enough the mechanism of the human voice, and that he wrote badly for singers. Withal he received the good advice—so far as his future popularity was concerned, that he should go to Italy, and study there.

Up to this time Meyerbeer had heard no Italian music to win him from his low opinion of Italian art; but acting on the counsel which he had received, and arriving in Venice in time to hear the *Tancredi* of Rossini in the first flush of its success, the sympathetic young German artist was seized with the utmost enthusiasm for the new romantic, as opposed to the old classic school, and was ready to become himself its most eager disciple; not, however, without several years' study to accomplish the transformation fitly; after which, in 1818, Meyerbeer, at twenty-four years of age, brought out at Padua his first opera in the free melodious effective Italian style, *Romilda e Costanza*.

The Paduans made it heartily welcome, partly for its own sake, partly as a compliment to Vogler, who had himself studied music in Padua.

In the next year, 1819, Meyerbeer wrote his *Semiramide*

Riconascinta for Turin; but it was his *Emma de Rosburgo*, produced at Venice in 1820, the same year in which Rossini brought out his *Eduardo e Christina*, which established Meyerbeer's fame in Italy.

In the meantime his German countrymen had looked askance at his abandonment of the great traditions of German music. Especially Weber, who was one-ideaed in music, and who had never yielded to, or even comprehended, the attraction of Italian music, regarded ruefully the defalcation of his old comrade. Happily, their clashing opinions did not break the two composers' firm friendship; and Weber showed his unalterable esteem for Meyerbeer as a man, and even as an artist—on his German side, by attempting wistfully to appeal to Philip against himself, when the musical world was beginning to ring with Meyerbeer's Italian feats, and Weber brought out with much care at Dresden Meyerbeer's German opera of the *Two Caliphs*, the rejection of which at Vienna had sent the composer off to Italy and Italian influences.

But Meyerbeer was not a man to hesitate in, or turn back from, a course adopted on due reflection. Notwithstanding his tact, neither his genius nor his family's influence in Berlin could make *Emma de Rosburgo* go down with a German public, when Meyerbeer got it represented in his native city, on a visit home in his twenty-eighth year, in 1821. The misadventure probably sent him more certainly back to Italy, where in Milan, at the Scala—one of the best Italian theatres—in the following year, he brought out *Margherita d'Anjou*, which was represented in London "six or eight years later," * and has been played in all the theatres of France and Belgium.

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

His next work was *L'Esule de Granata*, distinguished in Meyerbeer's history by the circumstances that it narrowly escaped defeat through the jealous machinations of Italian rivals, and that its hardly won triumph was therefore more complete and precious. Meyerbeer's last distinctly Italian opera—as his former operas had been purely scholarly—was *Il Crociato in Egitto*, represented in Venice in 1825, when Meyerbeer was thirty-one years of age. So great was the enthusiasm with which it was heard on its first appearance, that the composer was called for again and again, and at last crowned on the stage; and that the opera carried his name into both France and England. M. Fétis says of the *Crociato*, "that critics may remark in it, though it is still distinctly Italian, a reaction on Meyerbeer's part—shown for the first time since he had subjected himself to the influence of Italian music—and an inclination to attempt to harmonize the German and Italian schools, together with an expression of his own powerful dramatic instinct.

Meyerbeer was invited to Paris to direct the representation of the *Crociato*, which, however, was not so successful—except with a few critics—in the French capital as it had been elsewhere. M. Fétis says the French do not divide their crowns; they fall all on one head; and at this time they rested on the head of Rossini. Besides, the Parisians had imbibed the notion that Meyerbeer had already done his utmost, and that the *Crociato* was, as it were, his last word. On the contrary, Meyerbeer only bided his time, as on former occasions; and in the meantime events were occurring in his private life which kept him out of the world of art. He married, and

two children were born to him, both of whom he had the misfortune to lose in infancy.

It was not till 1828,* after six years of rest, that Meyerbeer, in his thirty-fifth year, brought out his *Robert le Diable*, written to the text of Scribe, the French dramatist. It was the opera on which Meyerbeer bestowed the mature labour and experience of his manhood, and which was to show him in yet another light—no longer the scholarly German or the naturalised Italian, but the original vigorous and passionate, if somewhat unscrupulous, dramatic composer. The French revolution of 1830 delayed the representation of *Robert le Diable* till the winter of 1831, when it was given at the Académie Royale with thunders of applause. Some fear had been expressed beforehand that the piece would not endure. "Don't disturb yourself," said a wise official, "it will rise to the clouds, and will make the tour of the world." The prediction was so far fulfilled, that while *Robert le Diable* sustained, and still sustains, severe assaults from the highest critics, it made the fortune of the *entrepreneur* of the opera, according to M. Fétis's proved testimony, besides saving from bankruptcy provincial directors of theatres. It stood through a hundred and sixty representations, and still the French public were not wearied.

* Ferdinand Hiller, in *Macmillan*, thus mentions the cluster of composers in Paris at this time :—"Cherubini was writing his masses for the chapel in the Tuileries; at the Grand Opera Meyerbeer was beginning his series of triumphs with *Robert the Devil;* Rossini was writing *William Tell;* Scribe (the dramatist) and Auber were at the height of their activity; and all the best singers were collected at the Italian Opera." Add to these names those of Mendelssohn and Hiller himself.

It was immediately pirated and brought out at the two London opera-houses; and it appeared the following year in a more lawful fashion, with its original staff of singers, and Meyerbeer to direct the representation, at the King's house.

This opera has been translated into German, English, Italian, Dutch, Russian, Polish, Danish, and played in great and small towns up to the present day; nay, it has long ago crossed the Atlantic, and its echoes have reached beyond the United States to Mexico and Havanna.

After the splendid success of *Robert le Diable*, Meyerbeer was engaged by the French opera "administration" to write the *Huguenots*. It was to be produced within a certain time, under pain of a fine; but Madame Meyerbeer was suffering from chest-complaint, and was ordered to Italy. Her husband, removing there with his family, craved more time for his work, and on being refused it, paid the forfeit and threw up the commission. He was too powerful a magnate to be offended without serious loss. In the end matters were arranged between the contending parties, and the *Huguenots* was brought out in 1836. It failed to create the sensation produced by its predecessor, and even excited some disappointment, being declared tedious in the beginning and deficient in intense interest throughout. But in course of time the *Huguenots* has become almost as popular as *Robert le Diable*, and after failing to appear on the English stage till 1842, six years after its appearance in Paris, and after being unsuccessful then, and not reproduced till two years later still (and that by a royal commission), it has passed into one of the great stock pieces of the English opera-houses. In 1841 Meyerbeer was appointed by his sovereign, the King of Prussia,

general director of music in Prussia—an office created for the composer.

In 1843 Meyerbeer produced a cantata called "La Festa alla Corte di Ferrara," for a fête given by the King of Prussia. A work of greater moment, an opera named *Ein Feldlager in Schlesien*, was written for the opening of the new opera-house at Berlin in 1844,* was produced under the title of *Vielka* at Vienna in 1847, and is still better known by its third and French name of *L'Etoile du Nord*, when it was represented with considerable modifications and alterations in 1855, eleven years after its appearance in Berlin. It was given in London in the same year (1855) when Meyerbeer came over to superintend the rehearsals, on account of the Italian recitatives which he had supplied in the room of the French dialogue.

Two years later, in 1846, Meyerbeer fulfilled a pious duty by setting to music the tragedy of *Struensee*, written by his dead brother, Michael Beer. The overture to *Struensee* has been played at the Philharmonic Society's concerts.—(*Imperial Biographical Dictionary.*)

It was not till the appearance of Meyerbeer's opera of *Le Prophète*, which he had kept some time by him, at the Académie in 1849, when the composer was fifty-five years of age, that he fully vindicated the power that he had shown in *Robert le Diable* and the *Huguenots*. "The Coronation March" is the grand point in the *Prophète*. "Meyerbeer's *Prophète* contains scenes sensational enough

* Of a painful *contretemps* which occurred to the successful composer at the performance of the *Camp of Silesia*, in Berlin, Moscheles thus writes:—"Unfortunately, I could not get a word with Meyerbeer, who was forced to hurry straight away from his desk, as conductor, to the bedside of his daughter Bianca, who was very dangerously ill." Bianca Meyerbeer recovered.

to make one shudder. There are fine things in the work, but it does not come up to the *Huguenots*."—(*Moscheles.*) The *Prophète* was given in London in 1850, the year after its first representation in Paris.

In 1859 Meyerbeer, arrived at the age of sixty-five, brought out in Paris *Le Pardon de Ploërmel*, which was immediately after given in London with the fresh name of *Dinorah*, under the personal superintendence of the composer.

Meyerbeer had yet another great opera—kept in store, it is said, as in the case of the detention of the *Prophète*, for lack of a competent singer to take the principal part. This last opera was *L'Africaine*, produced posthumously in Paris at a recent date. (It is said that, by a curious coincidence, Meyerbeer's three principal operas—those of *Robert le Diable*, the *Prophète*, and *L'Africaine*—each appeared in the crisis of a French revolution.)

Meyerbeer died in 1864, at the age of seventy years. He was in his day Kapell-Meister to the King of Prussia, member of the Academy of the Fine Arts at Berlin, foreign member of the Institut, officer of the Legion of Honour, and chevalier of the Belgian order of Leopold and of that of the Southern Cross. Mr. Haweis remarks of Meyerbeer that he was, like Spohr, distinguished for his abstemious and laborious life. "The name of neither is associated with excess of any kind: both were personally respected and beloved by a large circle of friends." As a composer Meyerbeer has individuality, strength, and fine harmonies; but, in the judgment of many critics, when he has no powerful situation to interpret, his music becomes marred by vulgarity and even triviality, or else, in seeking to be original, he displays himself mannered, while he is

not free from the use of those exceptional and unworthy sources of interest and excitement, afterwards so grossly abused in the French opera.

In addition to his operas, Meyerbeer wrote music to celebrate the centenary of Schiller's birth, the inauguration of the statue of Gutenberg at Mayence, and various events in the Prussian royal family. He was invited to furnish a choral piece for the Exhibition of 1862, but his compliance produced a failure. A "Stabat," a "Miserere," and a "Te Deum," and the setting of the ninety-first Psalm and of the Lord's Prayer are among his sacred music. He wrote many separate songs and melodies, including the "Ranz des Vaches d'Appenzell," "Le Vœu pendant l'Orage." No song of Meyerbeer has been more admired than the "Robert, toi que j'aime," which is put in the mouth of the half-mad Isabelle in *Robert le Diable*.

Charles Gounod was born either in 1815 or 1818, in Paris. He was a pupil of Halévy's in the Conservatoire, and finished his musical education in Rome, when, in consideration of a mass which he composed for the church of S. Luigi dei Francesie, he was named honorary Maestro di Capella for life. Returned to Paris, and desirous of composing for the stage, he wrote the opera of *Sappho*, brought out at the Académie Impériale in 1851, when Gounod was upwards of thirty years of age; but it made little impression either in France or England, where, by the influence of its prima donna, it was given in the following year. Another opera of Gounod's was a comparative failure; but in 1859, when he was over forty years of age, he produced, at the Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, his *Faust*, which at once gave him his prominent position among living composers.

"In Gounod I hail a real composer," writes Moscheles, referring to "Faust;" and he calls it "refined, piquant music."

In the following year, 1860, Gounod brought out his operas of *Philémon et Baucis* and of *La Colombe:* since then he has given to the world his overture to *Le Médecin malgré lui* and his *Jeanne d'Arc.* Among his lighter works are his "Meditations for Violin and Orchestra;" the piquant scherzo, "Marche funèbre pour l'Enterrement d'une Marionette," which created such a sensation at M. Guonod's concerts in St. James's Hall (*Athenæum*), and the numbers of "The Biondina Musical Novel." In *Jeanne d'Arc,* the genius of the composer is said to be most prominent in the celestial music heard in the Chaumière at Domremy, the prison of Rouen, and the public square of the market-place.—(*Athenæum.*) Guonod is a devoted follower of Gluck, so far as giving prominence to declamation is concerned.*

* A grateful tribute has been paid to one of M. Gounod's most recent compositions, which in its subject is very acceptable to an English audience. "A new composition was introduced from the fertile fancy of M. Gounod. It is the setting of the words written by Lord Houghton in commemoration of David Livingstone. It is no credit to British composers that they have allowed a French musician to express in notation the poetry of the lines which describe the final words of the great traveller, 'Good morning,' to his swarthy followers. But as M. Gounod, in an elegant address appended to his published elegy, states, 'La mort d'un grand homme n'est pas seulement un deuil national, c'est un deuil universel. Tout homme qui dévoue sa vie à l'humanité est le concitoyen de toute l'humanité.' Hence his pathetic air, 'In Memoriam.' In reading Lord Houghton's recital, M. Gounod forgot he was not the countryman of Livingstone, or rather he fancied he was of the same country. Here is a secret of a song of the heart, for such is M. Gounod's 'Ilala.' The simple melody, or dirge, goes to the very soul. It is one of those touching inspira-

Giuseppe Verdi's *Lombardi*, brought out between thirty and forty years ago, made his fame in Italy. Of his numerous works since, the most popular have been *Ernani*,* *Due Foscari*, *Luisa Miller*, *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore*, which, in its way, pleased alike in Italy, Germany, France, England, and America, and *Il Traviata*. Possessing a share of the qualities of melody and adaptability, which stood Bellini and Donizetti in good stead, Verdi is inferior to both in art, while he has been of all composers the most reckless, unhealthy, and absolutely vicious in his choice of some of his themes.

Ambroise Thomas, in his opera of *Hamlet*, and especially in his *Mignon*, has taken a rank next to Gounod (whose *chef d'œuvre* is also thoroughly German in subject) among French composers.

Friedrich von Flotow, born in Mecklenburg in 1811, the son of a noble German family, but long resident in Paris, where most of his operas have first appeared, is best known by his *Marthe*, which was brought out in Paris in 1848, when its composer was thirty-seven years of age; it made its way to London in the following year, was represented in an Italian form ten years later, in 1858, and has since been a stock piece on the English stage. According to

tions from the heart of hearts of a composer which, while fulfilling the technical requisitions of the most severe rules of art, has the irresistible influence of spontaneity and deep sensibility."—(*Athenæum.*) When "Ilala" was given at the Crystal Palace, it was with full orchestral accompaniments, "starting with the wailing notes of the oboe . . . the theme continued with solemn chords . . . until the deep open grave in the Abbey is reached, and then from deep devotion the tone of the instrumentation is changed to jubilant glorification, the harp, which had been heard pianissimo, joining with all the instruments in one of those bursts which are to be found in *Gallia* and in *Faust*."

* "*Ernani*, a quadrille and polka opera by Verdi."—*Moscheles.*

Mr. Hullah, Flotow's *Martha* is built upon one melody, "The last Rose of Summer," while Boildieu's "*La Dame Blanche* is erected on the foundation of the air "Robin Adair." "Other operas have had as their groundwork a collection of national melodies (notably *Der Freyschütz*); but these two have risen each on a single melody, and if it were taken away the superstructure would cease to exist."

Of the opéra bouffe music, so audacious, and lawless, and so popular in Paris, having as its great representatives Offenbach, with his *Bracanniers*, *Princesse de Trébizonde*, *Grande Duchesse*, and *L'Isle de Tulipatan*, and Lecocq,* with his *Fille de Madame Angot*, &c., &c., I do not desire to say a word, further than that it is frequently music, in its liveliness and even in its sentiment, altogether debased and profaned.

I may add that the success of two Italian opera-houses at the same time in London is considered problematical under the present system; that the high price given by the impresarios to the prime donne, like the star system in the theatre, necessitating under-paid subordinates, threatens seriously the prospects of the opera. To the same origin is owing the frequent employment of great singers in concerts to prevent commercial failure—a practice which also interferes with the proper preparation and bringing out of new pieces, so that those in authority are tempted to cling to the hackneyed stock pieces, particu-

* Lecocq is said to hold the position of Auber in the musical world of Paris, and to be, of all the composers of *opéra bouffe* (or comic opera without restraint), the one most capable of rising, and most likely to rise to higher compositions. His *Giroflé-Girofla*, received with much favour in London this season (1874), is described as "on a theme less objectionable than those of M. Lecocq's previous operas."

larly to the simple sensational operas of Verdi, Bellini, and Donizetti; and thus another danger hangs over the opera—that of the more cultivated lovers of music becoming wearied, and driven from the opera-houses. In the meantime, while Germany continues the true home of music, and Russia and America are the Eldorado of impresarios and prime donne, success in Paris and London alone gives rank to an opera and a singer. In every other respect apart from the opera—from the nearly universal establishment of choral unions, the prevalence of musical festivals in the large towns, the ever-rising standard of concerts, the encouragement offered by the institution of musical contests and prizes, such as those now held and given at the Crystal Palace, and the proposal for more musical colleges, the prospects of music are brightening and widening throughout Great Britain.

CHAPTER XI.

Berlioz, 1803—1869. David, 1810. Hiller, 1811. Ernst, 1814. Heller, 1818. Liszt, 1811. Brahms. Von Bülow, &c., &c. Rietz. Reinecke, &c., &c. Benedict, Costa, Randegger, &c., &c. Sterndale Bennett, Sullivan, &c., &c.

HECTOR BERLIOZ was born in the department of the Isère in 1803. He was the son of a surgeon, and received no early encouragement to his musical bent. He was sent to Paris, at the age of nineteen, to study medicine, which he immediately abandoned for music, entering the classes of the Conservatoire. By this breach of family discipline, young Berlioz incurred the displeasure of his father, who threw the lad on his own slender resources—those of giving lessons on the flute and guitar, and being chorus singer at a minor theatre. About 1834, Berlioz, at thirty-one years, produced at a concert of his own work, among other pieces, his remarkable overture of "Les Francs Juges." The previous year he had married a young English actress named Miss Smithson, his passion for whom he embodied in his "Symphonie Fantastique, épisode de la vie d'une Artiste," with its sequel, "Lelio, ou le Retour à la Vie," and his symphony of "Romeo e Juliette,"* brought out five years later.

* "The symphony ('Romeo e Juliette') of Berlioz was originally produced in Paris in 1839, in the Salle du Conservatoire. A memorable morning it was, that Sunday; for there was an audience of celebrities,

Going to Italy, Berlioz encountered Mendelssohn, and doubtless the genius of the two composers acted and reacted on each other. On Berlioz's return, he wrote his "Harold en Italie," a symphony which contained the composer's recollections of Italy, and which had an important part for the violin, written, it is said, on the suggestion of Paganini, who was so much delighted with the fulfilment of his idea that his admiration overcame his avarice, and he sent Berlioz a draft for twenty thousand francs. In 1835 Berlioz became musical critic to the *Journal des Débats*.

literary, scientific, and artistic, to listen to the works of a daring innovator, a young and ardent musician, whose imagination had been fired by reading the works of Shakespeare and Scott, of Byron and of Goethe, and whose technical tendencies were derived from Gluck. The very aspect of the composer as he stood, bâton in hand, to describe by means of notation the feuds of the Capulets and the Montagues, to express the passion of the lovers, to depict their despair and their deaths, excited sympathy. Berlioz had as assistants a hundred instrumentalists, and a chorus of a hundred and one voices. . . . The reception of the dramatic symphony was rapturous: never was there a greater triumph. But outside the Conservatoire walls a controversy sprang up about the artistic pretensions of Berlioz, which never ceased until the grave had closed over the remains of one of the most intellectual and poetical composers France or any other country has produced. It is a question whether the fame of the French musician would not have been more generally and earnestly acknowledged in his own country had he not been a journalist and a critic. His fiery temperament, his ready wit, his disdainful estimate of modern artists, his contempt for singers, his sarcasms against the lyric drama of his period, made him as many enemies as a similar course of action has procured for Herr Wagner. But, with all his pugnacity, there never existed a nobler-minded musician or a man of kindlier disposition than Berlioz. His struggles when, as a choralist or as a teacher of the guitar, he laboured to gain a bare existence, soured him; but, in spite of his bitter tongue and a trenchant pen, his friendships were long and lasting. . . . In Germany and in Russia Berlioz's genius was fully recognised during his tours to conduct his works."—*Athenæum*.

His opera of *Benvenuto Cellini*, brought out a little later at the Académie Royale, was unsuccessful in Paris, with the exception of its overture, the "Carnival Romain;" neither did it have a more favourable reception when it was produced under Berlioz's own direction at the Royal Italian Opera, in London, in 1835; but it has been welcomed in several towns in Germany. At the inauguration of the Colonne de Juillet, in 1839, Berlioz produced his "Symphonie Funèbre" and "Apothéose," in memory of the victims of the Revolution of 1830. The patriotic occasion added to the enthusiasm with which an audience of ten thousand persons listened to the music.

In 1841 Berlioz made a tour in Germany, and, including Leipzig in his tour, renewed his acquaintance with Mendelssohn; the two composers making an exchange of their conductors' bâtons in token of friendship.

While residing in Austria, Berlioz wrote the *Damnation de Faust*, a cantata afterwards brought out at the Opéra Comique, Paris. A little later he repaired to Russia, receiving much attention there; and thence to Berlin, where the King of Prussia had invited him to give a representation of his *Faust*, which was exciting great interest in Germany. Berlioz came to London in the Christmas of 1847, to act as conductor of the English operas which M. Jullien was giving in Drury Lane Theatre; but the appointment was not successful. The Philharmonic Society had already given an overture to one of his operas, at one of their concerts, and the music had failed to be understood. Now, under Berlioz's personal superintendence, the society gave "Harold," and some portions of *Faust*, which met with more appreciation. Berlioz's next work, on his return to Paris, was his *Fuite en Egypt*.

On this work there hangs a tale. Berlioz offered the piece to the world as the composition of a certain Pierre Ducré, a composer of the seventeenth century; and the antiquarian predilections of the critics being stirred, while their modern animosities were laid at rest, the *Fuite en Egypt* received an amount of attention and praise which would never have been bestowed on the work of a modern composer—or, at least, of Berlioz. The trick has been tempting in all generations, and, doubtless, the zest with which the impostor witnessed the result was not lessened by learning that the sage critics were setting themselves to hunt up more work by the apocryphal Pierre Ducré. When the sensation was at its height, Berlioz coolly announced his sole proprietorship in the *Fuite en Egypt;* but the consciousness of the feint which he had practised, with its necessity, may have impaired his triumph.

The wife whom the composer had wooed, singer-like, fell into mental infirmity, under which she laboured long, and died, when Berlioz reared the last monument to his love in the *Méditations Religieuses*, divided into "Trestia," "La Mort d'Ophélie," and "Marche Funèbre."

Berlioz was elected a member of the Institute in 1856. He died in 1869, aged sixty-six years. Among his works are the overtures "Le Roi Lear" and "Le Corsaire," the cantata on the death of Napoleon, "Le Cinq Mai," and collections of vocal pieces, such as "Irelande," "Die Sommernachte," "Fleurs des Landes." His *Fuite en Egypt* was extended by two additional parts.

Berlioz, though French by birth and rearing, was German in his musical proclivities; he was an earnest composer, with a high conception of art. His instrumentation was his strong point, and he was accustomed to work with

great choruses. His defects are said to have been "a natural incapacity of melodic invention," * and technical faults proceeding from his late and immature musical education and "his inability to play his compositions on any instrument." Still, there is no question of the imposing nature of Berlioz's work, and that even where it awakened doubt, as well as surprise, in the minds of thorough musicians, like Mendelssohn and Moscheles, their candour generally compelled them to admit Berlioz's natural power.† Moscheles thus writes of Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique," which the publishers sent him in a pianoforte edition:—"I can hardly form an opinion of the work before I know the score; but I cannot reconcile myself to the eternal unisons, octave passages, and tremolandos. I do not find a healthy sequence of harmonic progression. His 'Dies Iræ' and 'The Witches' Sabbath' seem to me indicative of a diseased fancy; and the development of figures, heaped on one another, often ends in a tight Gordian knot—who will cut it asunder? The young man, however, has warmth and poetic feeling; and certain isolated passages remind me, in their grandeur, of an ancient torso." Moscheles, in noting a round of visits to artists, thus records his impression of Berlioz:—"Berlioz, whose acquaintance I was anxious to make, was very cold and unsympathizing. His exquisitely penned score of 'Romeo and Juliet' lay upon the table: I turned over some of the

* "Imperial Biographical Dictionary."

† In spite of the following opinion:—"*Apropos*, the other day I saw Berlioz's symphony, arranged by Liszt, and played it through, and once more could not imagine how you can see anything in it. I cannot conceive anything more insipid, wearisome, and Philistine; for with all his endeavours to go stark mad, he never once succeeds." —*Letter from Mendelssohn to Hiller*, in *Macmillan*.

pages, but found the work so complicated, and the noise at my first glance so overwhelming, that I cannot venture as yet to give any judgment on the music. One thing, however, is certain—that there must be new effects in it."

The Wagner Society announced, to be given at its concerts in 1874, "the two grand symphonies by Berlioz, the 'Harold en Italie' and the 'Romeo e Juliette,' besides his overtures 'Le Roi Lear,' the 'Carnival Romain,' and also his 'Rákáczy March.'"

Berlioz wrote both the text and the score of some of his works. He was the author of two books, "Voyages en Allemagne et Italie" and "Les Soirées de l'Orchestre," which are said to be illustrations of his musical ardour and his wit.

Félicien David, born in the department of Vaucluse, 1810, is best known by his symphony "Le Désert," brought out in 1844, when the composer was in his thirty-fifth year. It is divided into three parts, and has a vivid Eastern colouring. Moscheles thus sums it up—"I heard Félicien David's 'Désert,' with its piquant original illustration of oriental life. The 'March of the Caravans,' with its clarineto obligato, the description-scene, with the sunrise, pleased me; but, on the whole, the subject is treated in the light Frenchified manner."—(*Moscheles.*) The origin of "Le Désert" was as remarkable as the sensation which it created in Paris in 1844, and in London in 1845. David was one of the famous modern composers who assumed enthusiastically the tenets of the St. Simonians to the extent of entering their sanctuary at Ménilmontant, and, on their dispersal, repairing, with some of the brethren, to the East, whence he returned with the idea of the "Désert." His works, next in reputation to the

"Dêsert," are "Cristophe Colomb," another symphony, and the opera of *Herculaneum*. Among David's songs, "Les Hirondelles," and two hymns which were written for the St. Simonians, called "Le Sommeil de Paris" and "La Danse des Astres," are well known.*

Ferdinand Hiller was born at Frankfort-am-Maine in 1811. His father was a Jew, in affluent circumstances. Young Hiller studied in Paris and Italy, and became a pianist and composer remarkable for the purity of his style. He came to London in 1852 and 1853, when he was over forty years of age, and gave, at one of the concerts of the Philharmonic Society, his symphony "In der Freie." He has long held the first post in the Conservatoire at Cologne, and has been the friend of Mendelssohn and of the best composers of his day. His compositions consist chiefly of symphonies and concert overtures, with pieces and studies for the piano.† Among the exceptions are two oratorios, *Die Zerstörung von Jerusalem* and *Saul*, and an opera named *Conradin der letzte Hohenstaufe*, the favourable reception of which delighted Mendelssohn in his last days. Hiller has written his recollections of Mendelssohn.

Heinrich Wilhelm Ernst, the famous violinist, born in Moravia in 1814, with Stephen Heller, born at Pesth in 1813, equally distinguished as a pianist, besides their separate works, supplied an exquisite contribution to music by writing together the "Pensées Fugitives."

* Among rising French composers are Franck, composer of the cantatas "Ruth" and "The Redemption;" Massenet, composer of "Marie Magdalène" and "Saint Saëns."

† "Hiller's six 'Studies' for pianoforte and violin, even as drawing-room pieces, are thoroughly piquant and effective."—*Moscheles.*

Dr. Liszt, a Hungarian by birth, was born in 1811. (In the November of the year 1873, his musical jubilee was celebrated at Pesth with great festivity.) Educated at Vienna and Paris, Liszt early acquired great celebrity as a pianist.* In more mature years his fame as a composer has been extensive, though his compositions have been marred by extravagances and excesses. In his personal history the same tendency to excess has alternated with such fits of fanaticism as that which threw him for a time among the St. Simonians.

His first opera was given at Paris in 1825, when the composer was only in his fifteenth year, and was not successful. Liszt long entertained the idea of expressing in music French romanticism, and of revolutionising the musical world. After becoming Kapell-Meister to the Duke of Saxe Weimar, he developed into an ardent disciple in the new musical school of Richard Wagner.

Liszt acquired a fortune by his professional tours. In Moscheles' life there is mention made of a tour of Liszt with Cramer through the English provinces, in which the remuneration was at the rate of five hundred pounds a month. Eventually Liszt's wealth was lost by speculation, and he

* Towards the spring Liszt arrived in Leipsic, fresh from his triumphs at Vienna and Prague, and revolutionised the quiet town. It will be remembered that in Paris he had excited Mendelssohn's highest admiration at his first concert, as he glided along the platform of the orchestra to the piano, dressed in the most elegant fashion, and as lithe and slender as a tiger-cat. Mendelssohn said to me, "There's a novel apparition—the virtuoso of the nineteenth century." I need hardly describe the impression made by his playing. When he played Schubert's "Erlkönig," half the people stood on their chairs. The "Lucia" fantasia turned everybody's head. With some other pieces, however, he was less successful."—FERDINAND HILLER, in *Macmillan's Magazine.*

resigned his appointment, and lived for some time in privacy at Athens, before returning to Germany and Hungary.

Among the composer's longer works are his oratorios of *Christos* and *Sainte Elisabeth*. Among his shorter pieces better known in this country are his two symphonies on "Tasso," "Mephisto Wälzer," "Goethe Fest-Marsch," and "Préludes." Of his "Ronde des Lutins" the *Athenæum* gives the following criticism:—"That most intricate and fanciful 'concerto study,' as the composer calls it, in which every imaginary difficulty is interwoven. It is a most original and piquant composition, for imps and elves seem to be skipping over the key-board as if in a moonlight revel."

Moscheles's testimony to a concerto of Liszt's, when the latter as a very young man first visited London, is to this effect:—"The 'Concerto in A Minor' contains chaotic beauties. As to his playing, it surpasses in power and mastery of difficulties everything I have heard." Dr. Liszt's music has recently been well interpreted in this country by the superb pianoforte-playing of Dr. Hans von Bülow, whose rendering of Beethoven's works is according to old Viennese tradition dating from the days of the great master.

With regard to modern music, Von Bülow has done wonders in inaugurating a change, by making the innovators' influence powerfully felt through his late (1873-74) successful performances in London and the provinces.

Of the new lights of musical Germany, who are more or less marked revolutionists of old standards, I can only mention a few. Brahms was long ago called in Germany "the Messiah of music." His "Quartett in A Major," op. 26, is one of his characteristic pieces. Von Bülow is himself

a distinguished composer. His best known work here, is, probably, his "Overture to Julius Cæsar," with its spirited march. Rubenstein is another great pianist, whose appearance in this country, some years since, made little impression, but whose fame elsewhere, atoning to him for English neglect, has begun to echo in reluctant ears.* Raff holds a high place for his concertos. The list may be closed here with the name of Rheinberger.

Among other German musicians of note are Julius Rietz, the composer of the "Lustspiel" overture; Reinecke, the composer of *King Manfred;* Von Holstein, the writer of the opera of *Der Haideschacht,* and with regard to whom Moscheles in his age wrote, "I think this composer has a great future before him;" and Max Bruch, the writer of the opera of *Lorely and Hermione* (*Winter's Tale,* Shakespeare).

H. Niels W. Gade, the Danish composer, is winning notice in England; but while there is a notion abroad that Germany, in her Mozart and Beethoven, reached her climax in music, there is also a theory that it is to Russia, with her great undeveloped powers and her decidedly musical tendency even in her infancy, that we are justified in looking as the most probable source of the next great musical era.†

* "The point of departure of Herr Rubenstein is the same as that of the modern composers of Germany—Herr Brahms, Herr Raff, Herr Max Bruch, &c.—namely, the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the posthumous quartetts; but it does not follow that this system of orchestration has been carried to excess by the imitators."

† "Glinka's opera, the *Life for the Czar,* is in preparation at the Teatro Dal Verne, in Milan. This work, since its production at the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg in 1836, has been given there some four hundred times. Glinka was born in Smolensko in 1804, and died

I must turn now to the deservedly esteemed foreign musicians naturalised in England at the present day.

Sir Jules Benedict, "hard-working Benedict," as he is called in Moscheles' diary, was born at Stuttgard, in 1805. His father was a banker. Young Benedict had so far anticipated his future career in his boyhood, as to play at a public concert and receive great praise as a pianist in 1819, when he was fourteen years of age. He studied later under Hummel, at Weimar, and under Carl Maria von Weber, at Dresden. Benedict accompanied Weber to Berlin, where he heard and knew the boy Mendelssohn, and to Vienna, where, in 1824, Benedict was engaged, at nineteen years of age, as accompanist and musical director at the Kärntnerthor Theatre. He was afterwards musical director at the San Carlo, Naples. He produced his first opera-buffa in 1827, when he was twenty-two years of age; and, after travelling in Italy and visiting Paris, he returned to Naples, and wrote his second opera—an opera seria. Benedict came to England nearly ten years later, in 1835, when he was thirty years of age, to assist at the

in Berlin in 1857. His studies were chiefly in Italy and Germany. He was the composer of another opera besides the *Life for the Czar*. When the late Prince Galitzin introduced at his concerts in St. James's Hall—which he conducted himself, being an exile—Glinka's compositions, a very favourable opinion was formed of the composer's talents." The recent marriage of the Duke of Edinburgh to a Russian archduchess, and the visit of the Czar during the season (1874), have contributed to make Glinka's music popular in this country.

The new opera of the Italian composer, Ponchielli, had a great success at the Scala, Milan, lately, and caused the composer to be called for no less than twenty-four times. The opera in question was *I Lituani*, with the libretto based on a Polish poem. Ponchielli's comic opera, *I Promessi Sposi*, is well known, and has been promised for representation in England.

concerts given by the great singer, Madame Malibran, and her husband, the violinist De Bériot. In 1835, we read, in Moscheles' Life, that "Julius Benedict became a member of the great musical guild in London, and asserted his position at once as an excellent musician and pianoforte-player. His long residence in Italy made him peculiarly fitted as an accompanist to the Italian singers, and in Moscheles's house he was heartily welcomed as a distinguished compatriot." He did not settle in England then; but after one more year in Naples, occupied in the composition of a third opera, he came back to England in 1836, and made his home there. He was conductor of the Italian opera at the Lyceum in 1837 and 1838. In the latter year, Benedict brought out at Drury Lane his opera, *The Gipsy's Warning*, founded on a very inferior drama. He produced at the same theatre, in 1844, when he was in his fortieth year, his *Brides of Venice;* and, in 1846, his *Crusaders*. "At Drury Lane Theatre I heard Benedict's opera, *The Brides of Venice*. There are fine orchestral effects, and the vocal parts are well treated, and worthy of special commendation." And of Benedict's *Crusaders*, the criticism is given—"The music is pleasing, and often dramatically effective."—(*Moscheles.*) All these English operas have been translated, and given with approval in the composer's native Germany. Sir Jules Benedict has composed the oratorio of *St. Peter*. He has conducted the operas brought out at Covent Garden during different seasons, besides presiding over the Norwich Festival for a period of years. In 1850 he went with Jenny Lind to America, where he conducted her concerts for two years. He has been at the head of the Harmonic Union and Vocal Association in this

country, and has done much good service in training choral singers. Sir Jules Benedict is an accomplished teacher in great repute. Much of his music is for the piano, and includes both classical music and pieces of a slight and fugitive character. His last opera is that of *The Minnesinger*.

"Among the young artists to whom Moscheles devoted his latest evening hours, and to whom his house was a home, was Sir Michael Costa, who showed the master his canzonettes." Since these early days, Sir Michael has not only been well known in connection with the opera, as director and conductor, but he has had an honourable reputation as a composer. Of his *Eli*, it can be written that "it is more popular than ever, after it has existed eighteen years." It has been given extensively in provincial towns, and has spread to Germany, where its 'March' is frequently played by the military bands. It is throughout, in the middle of its learning, Italian in melody, and very singable."—(*Athenæum.*) The composer's *Naaman* has also met with much approbation.

Randegger, the composer of the fine cantata of *Fridolin*, Schira, of *The Lord of Burleigh*, and Meyer Lutz, of *The Legend of the Lys*, rank next.

Of living English composers, in addition to those I have already mentioned, among whom Mr. G. A. Macfarren has a high position, there are other worthy representatives.

Sir William Sterndale Bennett was born at Sheffield, in 1816. He was the son of an organist; nor, indeed, is Bennett an unknown name in English musical annals, since "John Bennett" was a well-esteemed composer of madrigals in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. As a boy,

Sterndale Bennett sang in the choir of the King's College chapel, Cambridge; a little later, he was placed in the Royal Academy of Music, London. At the prize concert of the Academy, in 1833, when Mendelssohn was present, young Bennett, then in his eighteenth year, and already evincing high attainments as a pianist, played his own "Concerto in D Minor," and won the cordial approbation of the master. In 1835, at the trial night of the Philharmonic Society's Concerts, after Moscheles had played his overture to *Joan of Arc*, "the youth, Sterndale Bennett, a pupil of Cipriani Potter, played a pianoforte concerto of his own composition. Moscheles thought highly of the performer, his playing, and the concerto as well."—(*Life of Moscheles.*) Among Bennett's next and more independent works, were the overtures, "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and "Parisina."

In 1835 Bennett, then in his twentieth year, played his "Concerto in C Minor," at one of the concerts of the Philharmonic Society, with decided success. In 1836, he brought out his overture of "The Naïades," to this day one of the most popular of his works. In the same year, by the liberal instrumentality of the Messrs. Broadwood, Bennett went to Leipsic for the advantage of twelve months' study and intercourse with Mendelssohn; and four or five years later, he spent another year at Leipsic, when he wrote his *Wood Nymphs*. On his return to England, he began, in 1843, a series of chamber concerts, which were given annually for thirteen years. In 1849 he founded the Bach Society, for the better study of the great old composer's works. In 1856 Bennett, at forty years of age, became permanent conductor of the Philharmonic Society's concerts; and, in the same year, he was elected

to the Music chair of Cambridge University (having been twelve years before an unsuccessful competitor for the same chair in Edinburgh University), and was created a Doctor of Music.

Sir William Sterndale Bennett, by the high standard which he has held uncompromisingly without once departing from it, has had a refining influence on music in England. The fine and delicate grace which mark both his writing and his playing, give them individuality, if not force. Besides the more important works of Bennett already mentioned, among the most admired of his shorter pieces are his "Fountain" and his "Geneviève."

Arthur Sullivan finished his musical education at Leipsic. His *Tempest* music early made a lively impression on good judges. Moscheles wrote warmly of him—"I feel sure he will do credit to England." In very different styles, Arthur Sullivan's "Overture de Ballo" and his recent oratorio of the *Light of the World*, show that he has not failed to fulfil the promise of his youth.

Sir F. Gore Ousely, Professor of Music at Oxford, is the composer of the oratorio of *Hagar*.

Alfred Holmes, brother of H. Holmes, the violinist, in his *Cid* and his opera of *Ines de Castro*, has established a strong claim to dramatic power and fine orchestration.

Virginia Gabriel (Mrs. March) has set an example, considering the little that women have done for music, in her last year's cantata of *Evangeline*.

Of the great living executants who are generally more or less composers, such as Von Bülow, Madame Schumann, (whom I have already had occasion to mention), Joachim *

* "Joachim, a boy of thirteen years, has come to London, bringing a letter of recommendation from Mendelssohn. His talent, however,

Charles Hallé, Madame Essipoff, Arabella Goddard, Agnes Zimmerman, &c., I need not say anything: the impression which they make on their contemporaries is sufficient.

John Pyke Hullah, the founder of the celebrated system of singing which bears his name, and the organist of the Charter House, has done much service to national musical education.

I have not space to do more than mention a few minor composers who have contributed largely to preserve, transmit, and make popular in their own way the gentle science in England. Among them are Chappell, Brinley Richards, D'Albert, and the brothers Godfrey.

As for the original composers of the original Christy Minstrels' Negro Melodies—that attempt to return and appeal to the simplest, rudest, childlike nature, though not to the grand rugged passion of the ancient ballad—their individuality, extending beyond the Atlantic, is as duskily obscure as the complexion of the executants.

is his best introduction. We organized a small party expressly for him. I listened with delight to him and Emily (Moscheles's daughter) playing in Mendelssohn's lovely 'D Minor trio.' After that I was fairly taken by surprise by Joachim's manly and brilliant rendering of David's 'Variations,' and De Bériot's 'Rondo.' Mendelssohn is right: here we have talent of the true stamp."—*Moscheles.*

CHAPTER XII.

Richard Wagner, 1813.

WILHELM RICHARD WAGNER, the head of the new school of music, was born at Leipsic in 1813. His father, an *actuarius* of police belonging to a family of wealth and social consideration, died six months afterwards, and the widow re-married "an actor, painter, and author of comedies," who died, in his turn, when Wagner was seven years of age. An attempt had already been made to rear the little lad, from the foundation, as a painter, but this was foiled by his hopelessly bad drawing; strange to say he was equally slow in learning pianoforte-playing, though in this case there was the hopeful symptom that he was found "hammering at tunes from the overture to *Der Freischütz*, with monstrous fingering, in lieu of practising his exercises." However, his teacher gave him up, and his admirer, Dannreuther, from whose little book I draw the following sketch, confirms the sentence by the commentary, "Wagner continues to this day to torture the piano in a most abominable fashion."

According to Dannreuther, music was but an accessory in the liberal education which Wagner acquired at the Kreuz Schule of Dresden, in anticipation of a university

course. The lad had the making of a poet in him in those days, dreaming tragedies and reading Shakespeare in the original. But surely one of his dreams was curiously characteristic of the future turbulent composer. He planned a huge tragedy, which should be a combination of *Hamlet* and *Lear*, in the course of which as many as forty-two men were to die, so that he should be under the necessity of recalling them as ghosts, in order to ensure the preservation at once of the interest and of the requisite amount of actors. He actually worked at this play for two years; and even after an "intense impression" had been made on his musical faculty by hearing the instrumental music of Beethoven and Mozart at the famous Gewand-haus Concerts, Leipsic, Wagner only diverged from the idea which had taken possession of him so far as to write choruses, &c., &c., to be added to his play.

A quarrel with his family, in consequence of the interruption caused to his studies by his precociously and wildly ambitious project, had no effect on the mad young Hercules. At this period an overture of his composition, which he himself describes* as the climax to his absurdities, was given and ridiculed at the Leipsic Theatre. Probably as a wholesome result of this discipline, Wagner, while continuing at Leipsic University, went through a strict contrapuntal training. Under his teacher Weinlig, Wagner brought out, amongst other work, an overture which was given with favour at the Gewand-haus—the first marked sign of encouragement which the composer received. He is described as at this time the devoted disciple of Mozart and Beethoven, with whom he was eventually to place himself in something like daring opposition and

* Dannreuther.

rivalry. Dannreuther quotes, in proof of his assertion, from Heinrich Dorn, in Schumann's *Zeitschrift* for 1838, "I doubt whether there ever was a young musician who knew Beethoven's works more thoroughly than Wagner in his eighteenth year. The master's overtures and larger instrumental compositions he had copied for himself in score. He went to sleep with the sonatas, and rose with the quartetts; he sang the songs, and whistled the concertos (for his pianoforte-playing was never of the best); in short, he was possessed of a *furor Teutonicus*, which, added to a high education and a rare mental activity, promised to bring forth rich fruit."

In 1833 and 1836 Wagner, in his twenty-first and twenty-fourth years, composed two operas, which have passed into oblivion. The same year (1836) he composed the overtures of "Polonia" and "Rule Britannia," and about that time he married. At the close of the period he was left penniless and encumbered by debt, in consequence of the failure of the Magdeburg theatre, of which he had been conductor. From Magdeburg he went to Berlin, where he was unable to procure the performance of his last opera; he then became conductor of the theatre at Königsburg.

In the following year, 1837, while conducting the theatre at Riga, he projected the first of his great operas, *Rienzi*, founded on Bulwer Lytton's novel. It was designed—with Wagner's usual magnificent disregard for time, space, and probabilities—to be in five acts, and altogether on so vast a scale as to be only admissible at the largest theatres. When Wagner had written the music for two acts of *Rienzi*, he set out with it in 1839, when he was twenty-six years of age, for Paris, being, as his bio-

grapner narrates, "without funds, or friends," or definite plan. One piece of good fortune befell him: he met Meyerbeer at Boulogne; and Wagner's score so struck his senior, that he supplied the young man with letters of introduction to the musical and theatrical world for which he was bound. But much more was wanted, especially as Meyerbeer was not personally present for any length of time, to ensure victory, in the light-minded, mercurial capital, for gigantic undertakings, and for the bold interloper who was to end by being the assailant of time-honoured standards. Wagner had to taste again the full bitterness of adversity during the two years when, unwelcomed and unappreciated, he was driven by necessity into writing articles for Schlesinger's *Gazette Musicale*, and into setting operas of Halévy and Donizetti for the pianoforte and other instruments, instead of more congenial occupation.

Mr. Dannreuther gives us an idea of the peculiar style of some of Wagner's literary articles by referring to two which contained much of the man—"Das Ende eines deutschen Musikers in Paris" and "Eine Pilgerfahrt zu Beethoven." During this period Wagner wrote, in the short space of seven weeks, the music for his next opera, *Der Fliegende Holländer*.

Only after Wagner was forced to despair of success in Paris did he send the score of his *Rienzi* to the Court Theatre, Dresden. The piece was accepted, brought out in 1842, when Wagner was in his thirtieth year, and proved a great success. Suddenly, as in the case of many another great man, after a long and severe trial, Wagner awoke and found himself famous. He was "the most popular man" at least in Dresden, where Weber in his

day had achieved a yet more instantaneous and spontaneous popularity; and he was the King of Saxony's Hof-Kapell-Meister. In the following year, 1843, *Der Fliegende Holländer* was produced at Dresden.

From the date of Wagner's rising fortunes, which were, however, to suffer more than one eclipse, Mr. Dannreuther does little more than mention the names and dates of the composer's still more imposing and, according to himself, more matured operas,—always immense in their proportions, and for the most part stormy in their execution.

In 1845, when Wagner was in his thirty-third year, and acting as conductor at Dresden, he concluded and brought out his great opera, *Tannhäuser*. Two years later, in 1847, he produced *Das Liebesmahl der Apostel*, a scena for male voices and orchestra, and his fourth opera, *Lohengrin*. Two years later still, in 1849, the composer achieved *Die Meistersinger* ("Hans Sach, the cobbler-bard"*) which was originally intended to form a sort of comical pendant to *Tannhäuser* and *Siegfried's Tod*.

Immediately afterwards there occurred the political disturbances, approaching to a civil war, in Saxony. Wagner was actively concerned in the stirring events of the time, and was forced to quit Dresden and go into exile. He made his home at Zurich, and dwelt there for a period of years. In 1855, when he was forty-two years of age, he came to England on the invitation of the Philharmonic Society, which gave his music at their con-

* "The orchestral introduction to the third act of the opera foreshadows the religious calm of a Sabbath morn, and the repose of the scene in the old German town on which the curtain rises. The melodious placidity of this movement must surprise those who hear it for the first time, and under an impression that Wagner's music is never simple and intelligible."

certs, eight of which he conducted. He wrote, as in his youth, on musical subjects; one of his most popular contributions to the literature of music, and one which has become identified with his name, being "Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft." In the course of Wagner's protracted isolation at Zurich, he accomplished a great manifestation of his dramatic and operatic views on the theme still dearer to the German than the Arthurian legends to the English heart, "Der Ring des Nibelungen," including *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Gällerdämmerung*. Of this colossal work, the scores of the three first parts are finished; and the composer is engaged on "the final act of the fourth," according to Mr. Dannreuther.*

In 1857 Wagner, in his forty-fifth year, took a little recreation in writing the poem, and later (in Venice) the music, of "Tristan und Isolde." Of this work he himself gives the somewhat touching account—"This I conceived and completed after already having finished the greater part of the musical composition of "Die Nibelungen." What induced me to pause in this extensive work was the desire to produce something which, by reason of its less ambitious proportions that would render it better calculated for scenic performance, would enable me to hear once more some production of my own—a wish which my encouraging experiences in regard to the performances of older works in Germany, seemed to place within my grasp."

In the years 1859 and 1860 Wagner revisited Paris on successive occasions, and in the course of the last visit gave three concerts. In the following year, 1861, his attempt to establish his music in Paris went a step

* Wagner is his own poet and dramatist.

further. By command of the emperor, *Tannhäuser* was brought out at the Grand Opera. But it would seem that Wagner can take no abiding hold upon the Parisians, and must fail to establish any sway over them. Whether from political or even more indefensible partisanship, the great opera was, in Mr. Dannreuther's words, "hooted and whistled off the stage by the members of the Jockey Club."

In 1863, the composer made triumphant professional tours, in which he conducted concerts throughout Germany—awakening fully to the genius of her son, Austria and Prussia. In 1864, King Ludwig II., of Bavaria, summoned Wagner to Munich; and there have been performed, in succession, *Tristan*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Das Rheingold*, and *Die Walküre*.

In 1870 Wagner married, for the second time, a daughter of the composer Liszt, and formerly the wife of the composer Von Bülow, from whom she was separated according to German law.

In this year (1874) Wagner's friends hold that his sun will be in its zenith; for a new and splendid experiment is to be tried, and an opportunity, such as never was afforded to an artist before, granted him for the correct and complete performance of his greatest work under his own supervision. With a view to this end, "Wagner Societies" have been in the course of years formed, it is said, "absolutely without agitation on the master's part," in many of the large towns of Europe and America. These societies have not only set themselves to produce Wagner's music, but have collected three hundred thousand thalers, by means of which a great theatre has been erected at Bayreuth, where a "three-night opera" is to

be given to the public.* That such a great venture, successful or unsuccessful, will have a marked effect on operatic history does not admit of a doubt.

Until recently, Wagner, his opinions and his works, formed the materials for a widely extended musical controversy. Old authorities, such as Moscheles, were inclined to look upon his theories and practice as simply anarchical. New men, loving new movements in the kingdom of art as in other kingdoms, hailed Wagner as the founder of a fresh musical dynasty. Of these increasing followers, perhaps, Herr Dr. Liszt is the most notable.

By his disciples it is believed that Wagner, starting in reality from the key-note struck by Beethoven in the three first movements of the Ninth choral Symphony in D minor, has revealed a new musical world for genius to conquer, and has created a fresh lyric drama in the room of that which, under the original composer's hands, was young and vigorous, but which has been overdone and overlaid until it has grown old and effete, and is on the verge of extinction.

By his opponents Wagner has been regarded as far outdoing both Rossini and Meyerbeer in his extravagant instrumentation and passionate effects; he has been especially accused, in the first place, of crashing discords, whether or not the discords are to evolve higher harmonies than the world has yet heard.

Of the indomitable energy of the man, who, while he himself acknowledges the absurdity of his youthful aspirations, and, while he professes such a gradual mental growth and development as have demanded, in a fitting

* The opening of the great Opera House at Bayreuth, which was to have taken place this year (1874), is deferred till 1875.

sacrifice, the modification of many of his views and paradoxes, and even the relinquishment (as in contradiction of his more mature convictions) of some of his work, yet who has still held strenuously by the inspiration of his genius, and worked it out with unflagging zeal and dogged persistency, there cannot be a question. Of his partial success, also, there is no longer room for a difference of opinion. In spite of strong opposition and prejudices at least as violent as the composer's partialities, Wagner's high place in the concert-room is now an accomplished fact. It has been again and again admitted lately, in very different quarters, by critics, who only agree in this, that they have been by no means particularly disposed to come under the influence of Richard Wagner; that no candid judge can any longer deny the great merit, even if it be alloyed with great faults, of his instrumental music. Henceforth, in this line at least, Wagner's must be a potent name in the musical world.

But with regard to his operas, only in Germany, as yet, has the same favourable opinion become nearly unanimous. Even occasional successes, where the operas are concerned, are apt to be followed by signal failures elsewhere. France has, till now, been unpropitious. Belgium and Italy, after applauding, have relapsed into indifference; and we are told with regard to England that it will be absolutely necessary for a thoroughly trained German company to come over to London before we can so much as hear an opera of Wagner's tolerably performed. The unexpected death of an accomplished singer, a few months ago, put an end, for the present, to the hope of having an opera of Wagner's brought out in an English version.

It remains only for me to supply a few notes from the

information which the composer has himself afforded of his own intentions in several of his works.

"*Rienzi*," writes Wagner,* "a work full of youthful fire, which gained my first success in Germany, and which continues to be performed, not only at the theatre of Dresden, where I produced it first, but, together with the rest of my operas, at many other German theatres,—I do not attach any special importance to this work, which was conceived and executed under the influence of my earliest impressions, received from Spontini's heroic operas and from the glittering *genre* of the Parisian Grand Opéra, as represented by Auber, Meyerbeer, and Halévy—I do not, I say, attach any importance to it at present, because it does not embody any essential phase of my later artistic views. . . . I completed *Rienzi* during my first sojourn in Paris. I had the splendid Grand Opéra before me, and was presumptuous enough to flatter myself with the hope of seeing my opera performed on that stage. Should this wish of my youth still be realised, you will agree with me that the decrees of fate are indeed wonderful, placing as they do so long an interval between a wish and its accomplishment, and allowing such totally different experiences to accumulate."

Of *Der Fliegende Holländer* its composer writes, "You perceive that the splendour of the Parisian ideal had already commenced to wane in my eyes, and that I began to draw the laws for the form of my conceptions from a different source than the sea of recognised publicity which lay before me. . . . In this work, as well as in the following, I turned, in the choice of my subject, once for all from the field of history to that of popular tradition. . . .

* "The Music of the Future," translated by Edward Dannreuther.

All details necessary for the description and representation of historical and conventional things—all delineations of a distinct and distant historical epoch, such as modern writers of historical novels and plays treat so circumstantially—all this I could pass over. . . . The legend, to whatever time or nation it may belong, has this advantage, that it assumes nothing of such a time or such a nation but what is purely human, and renders this in a form peculiar to itself, of great pregnancy, and therefore at once perfectly intelligible. A ballad, a popular refrain, is sufficient to give us instantly a clear impression of this character.

(*Der Fliegende Holländer* is said to be one of the composer's works which is now given up by him in so far as its fitting in with his later musical theories is concerned.)

"In *Tannhäuser*," writes Wagner again, "you will find the action developed from its inner motives with a much greater force. The final catastrophe emerges without the least constraint from the lyrical-poetical contest, where no other power than that of the innermost sentiments brings it about in such wise that even its form remains purely lyrical."

"The interest in *Lohengrin*," the composer finally declares, "rests entirely upon a process in the heart of Elsa, which touches all the secrets of the soul—the duration of a charm that spreads, with convincing truth, a wonderful happiness over all surroundings, depends entirely upon her refraining from the question, 'Whence?' —the question bursts, like a cry of despair, from the deep anguish of a woman's heart, and the charm has vanished."

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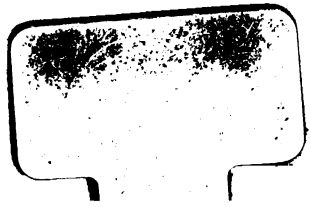
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